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EYEWITNESS TO STALINGRAD

A soldier's account of the turning point of WWII

HISTORY MAGAZINE

BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING HISTORY MAGAZINE
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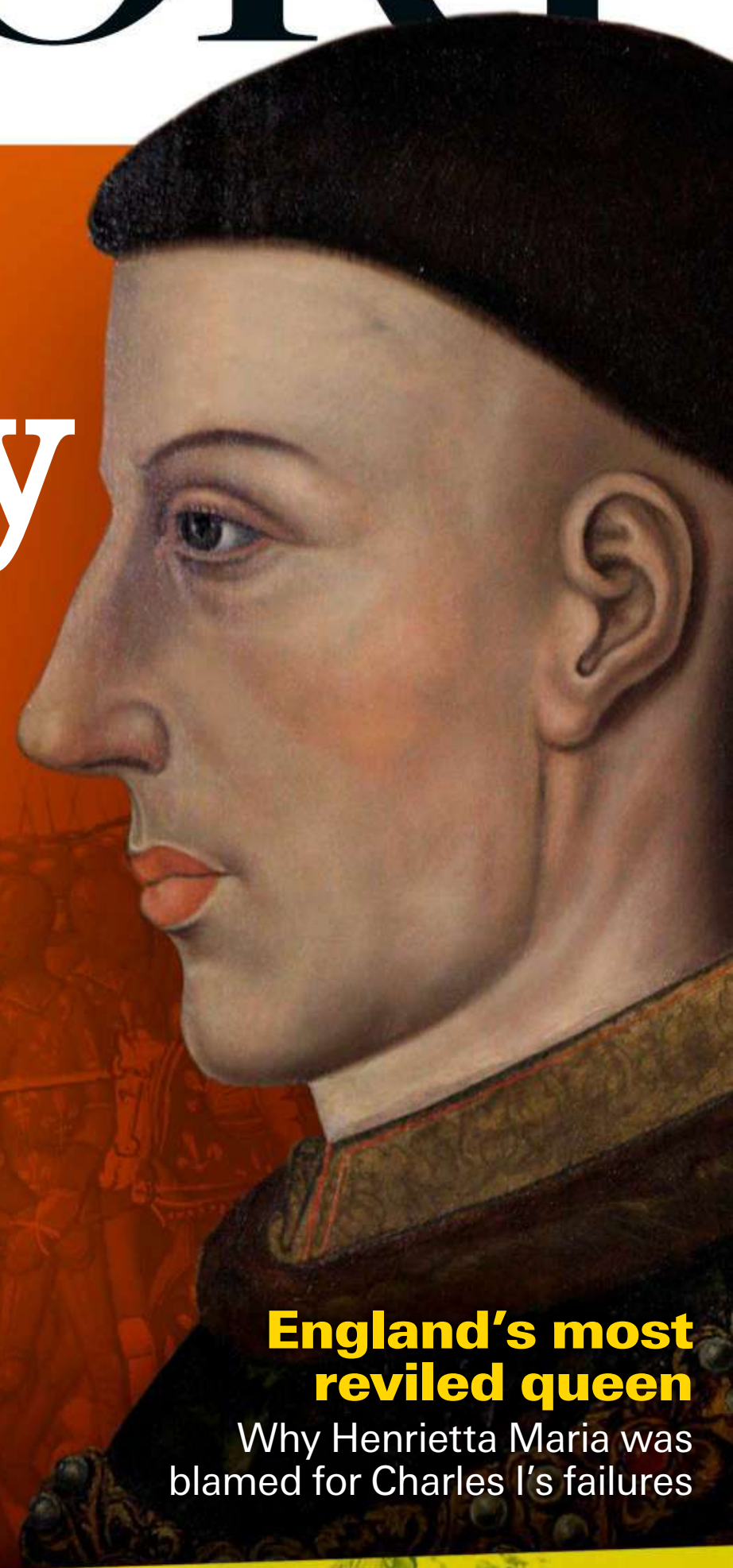
Henry V's fatal legacy

How the victor of Agincourt sowed the seeds of English military disaster



MEDIEVAL TRAILBLAZERS
Janina Ramirez on three women who smashed the stained glass ceiling

Fake news in the 17th century
The political scandal that rocked Charles II's reign

England's most reviled queen
Why Henrietta Maria was blamed for Charles I's failures

The enduring trauma of partition

How the 1947 division of British India shaped the lives of generations

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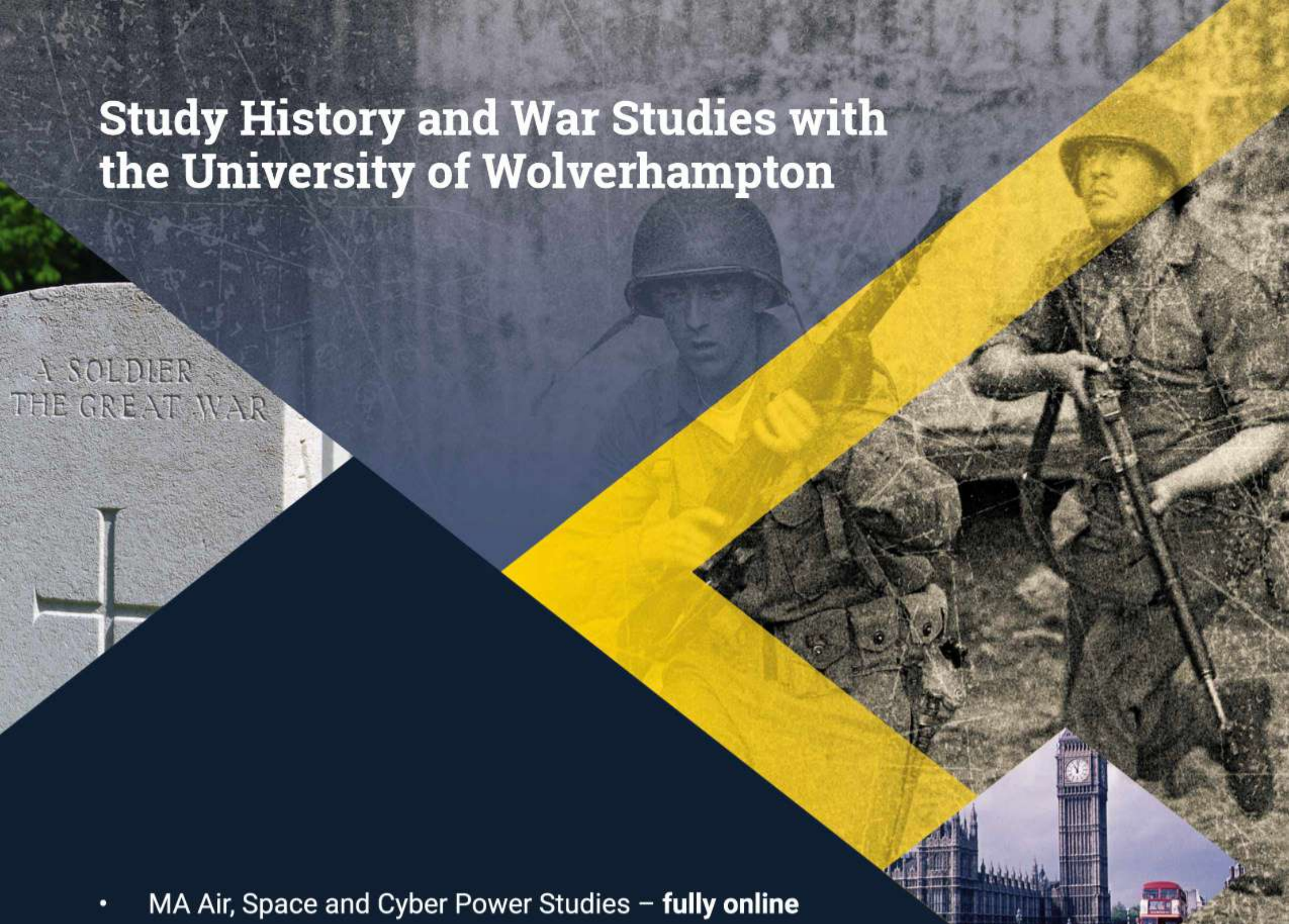

WELCOME

SEPTEMBER 2022

BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE

Henry V was a hard act to follow. A renowned warrior king, he triumphed at Agincourt, conquered large swathes of France and secured the French throne for his son and heir – all before dying at 35. By any measure **Henry VI did not live up to his father's example**. In fact, as Lauren Johnson writes in this month's cover feature, his reign "reads like a Top Trumps of failure". So why couldn't Henry VI match up to his illustrious father, and how far was the elder Henry to blame for the disasters that followed? These are the questions Lauren seeks to answer in her piece, beginning on page 22.

Six hundred years later, we're preparing for another leadership change as the contest is under way to decide who will replace Boris Johnson as **Britain's prime minister**. Johnson's downfall has been dramatic, but is it really that unprecedented? On page 10 Richard Toye looks back over the past century to see what parallels can be drawn with how other British leaders relinquished the top job.

On a personal note, I realise that this issue marks my **10-year anniversary** as editor of *BBC History Magazine*. I'm hugely appreciative of all of you who've been with the magazine for the past decade – and even longer! – and delighted that we've also welcomed many new readers over this period. There will be lots of exciting things to come in the months and years ahead, so I do hope you'll continue this historical journey with us.

Rob Attar
Editor

THREE THINGS I'VE LEARNED THIS MONTH

1. Not getting things straight
The Leaning Tower of Pisa is one of the most unusual heritage attractions I've ever seen up close, and I was interested to read that the slant dates right back to its construction in the late 12th century (page 36).

2. Four-legged fiends
Daniel Ogden's feature on dragons is full of fascinating details, including the fact that it wasn't until the medieval period that western dragons were depicted with four legs rather than two (page 65).

3. Lighting up the world
In Helen Carr's *Anniversaries* she describes how the 1859 solar storm known as the Carrington Event was so powerful that it meant the Northern Lights could be seen as far south as the Caribbean (page 18).

THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS

Leanda de Lisle
"Henrietta Maria is the most reviled queen consort since the union of the crowns, but I believe that behind the myths, she was one of the most remarkable in her intelligence, courage and love."
Leanda argues that the Stuart queen is undeserving of her rotten reputation on page 78

Kavita Puri
"The 75th anniversary of independence and partition is significant because the number of eyewitnesses are dwindling – and both in Britain and on the Indian subcontinent, we are still only starting to grapple with its complex legacy, individually and nationally."
Kavita explores partition's traumatic legacy on page 50

Victor Stater
"I'm fascinated by a crucial moment in British history: the 'Popish Plot', an alleged – but utterly fictitious – assassination plot aimed at Charles II. The plot triggered a political crisis and helped create two-party politics in England."
Victor reveals how the Popish Plot transformed the nation's political landscape on page 42

Janina Ramirez
"In my book *Femina* I have synthesised many years of 'doing history differently' into an interdisciplinary approach which puts ignored, overlooked and overwritten individuals back into our historical narratives."
Janina profiles three remarkable women who thrived in the medieval world on page 71

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ON THE COVER: HENRY V, KING OF ENGLAND FROM 1413 UNTIL 1422: ALAMY, THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT, 1415: BRIDGEMAN. SOLDIERS OF THE RED ARMY IN STALINGRAD: AKG-IMAGES. MUSLIM REFUGEES IN INDIA'S RELIGIOUS RIOTS, NEW DELHI: GETTY IMAGES. THIS PAGE: GETTY IMAGES /ALAMY/LYNN HATZIUS/JENI NOTT

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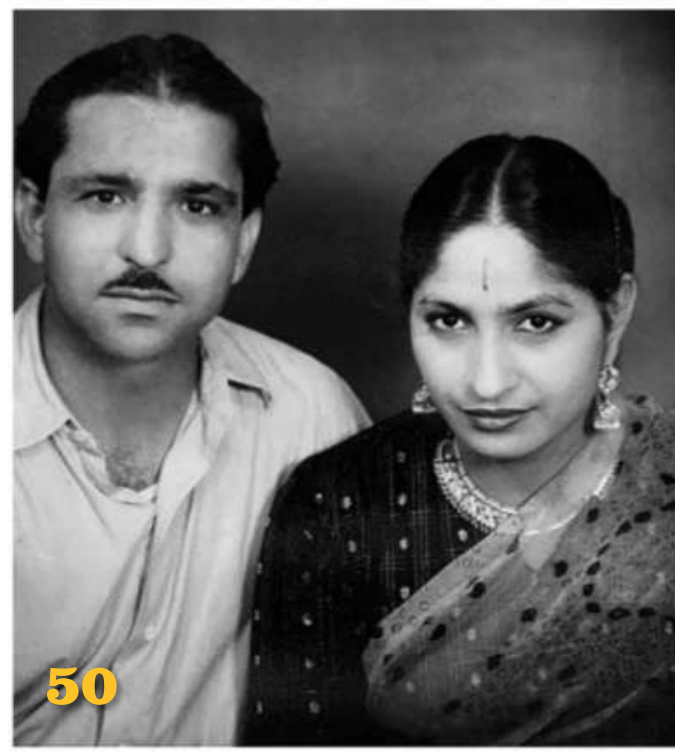

WALE CATHEDRAL/AANCHAL MALHOTRA

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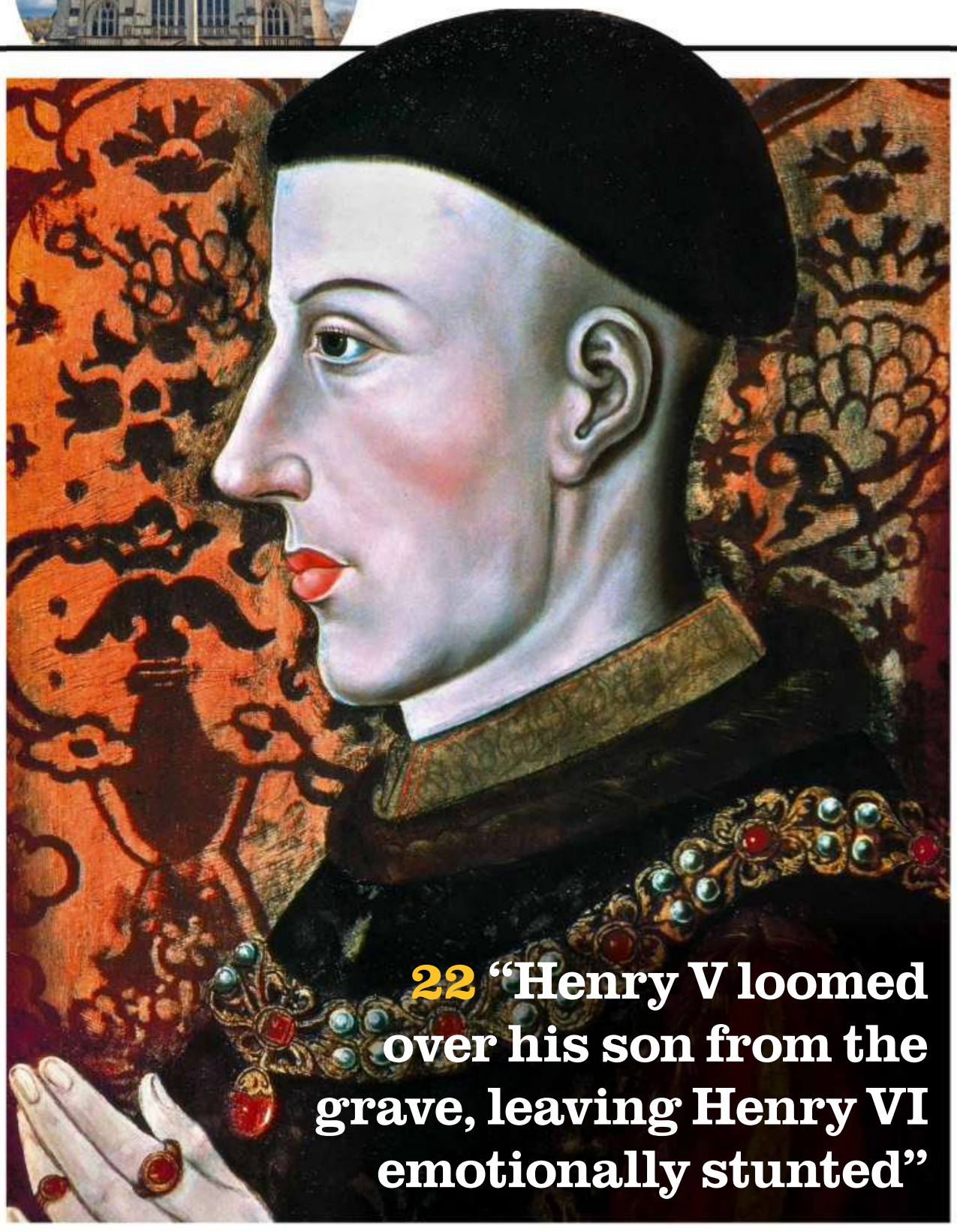

22 “Henry V loomed over his son from the grave, leaving Henry VI emotionally stunted”

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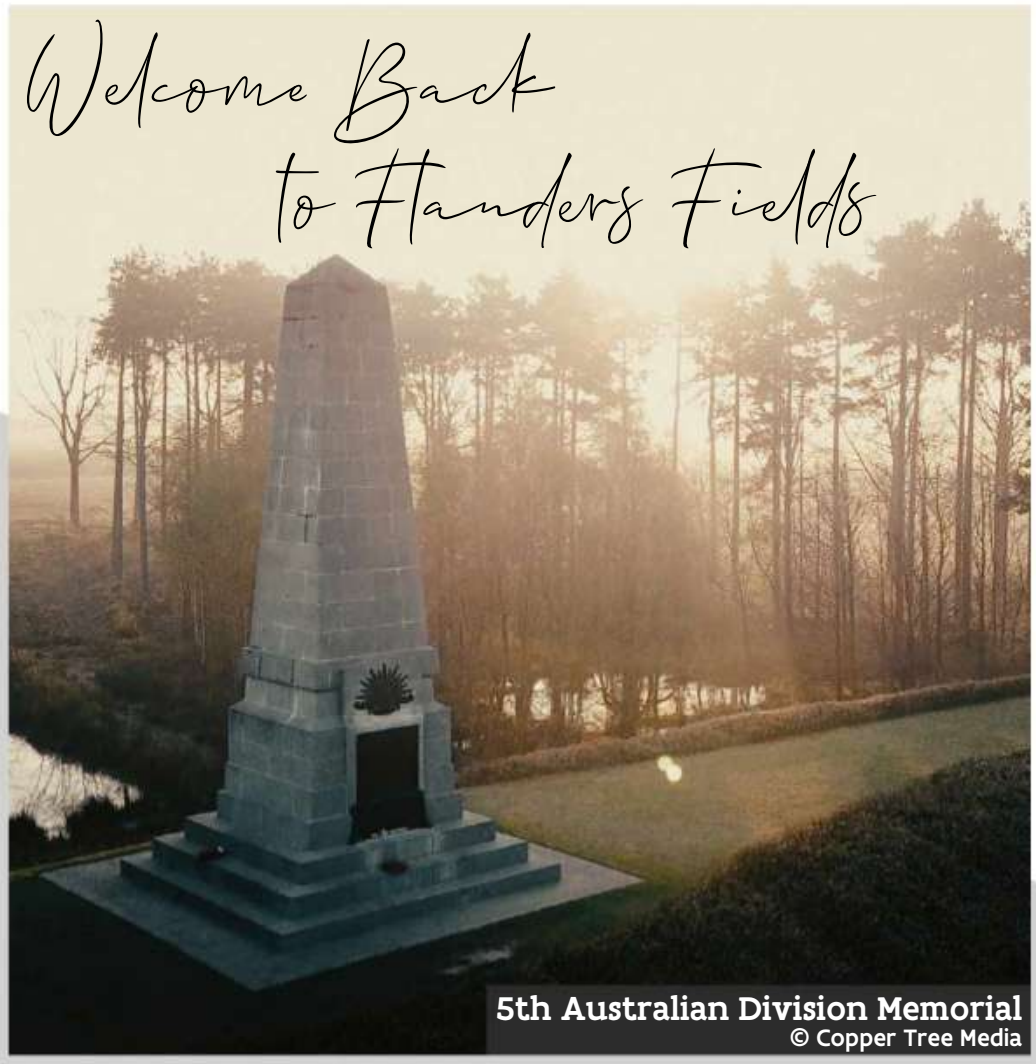

5th Australian Division Memorial
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CWGC Tyne Cot Cemetery

Flanders Fields
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Ypres
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The Last Post at The Menin Gate
© Milo Profi

Welcome Back to Flanders Fields Pass

Available for travel until 30 September 2022, the "Welcome Back to Flanders Fields Pass" offers visitors discounts or free entry to museums, day tours, tour guiding and more. Simply book an overnight stay with a participating accommodation facility in the region. For more details visit: **visitflanders.com/en/themes/flanders_fields/welcomeback**

"It's not the same without our visitors, we miss you" is the catch cry from the locals in Flanders Fields.

1914-18 Flanders Fields

Located in the west of Belgium, the region of Flanders Fields is synonymous with some of the most treacherous battlefields of World War One.

Despite the devastation of the region over 100 years ago, today Flanders Fields is a beautiful and serene area, interspersed with charming cobblestone towns and villages. Visitors can see and do a lot in a just a few days in the compact region.

At the heart of Flanders Fields is Ypres (or Ieper as it is known officially in Flemish). There is something inexplicable about the connection many visitors feel when in Ypres, whether it's a sense of living history, a family association or the warm welcome from the locals, it's a special place that goes straight to the heart of travellers. Standing proudly in the centre of Ypres is the magnificent Cloth Hall, a reminder that this city was one of Europe's most important trading centres, and that today houses both the In Flanders Fields Museum and Yper Museum; it's also possible to ascend the building's belfry tower to enjoy far-reaching views over the surrounding landscapes. A short walk takes you to the Menin Gate memorial, where, every evening at 8 o'clock, visitors can observe the Last Post ceremony being performed by the volunteer buglers of the Last Post Association in honour of the soldiers that died during the First World War.

Outside of Ypres, there are many nearby points of interest for those looking to discover the history of this region. As well as the hundreds of cemeteries, including Tyne Cot, the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the world and Lijssenthoek, adjacent to where a WW1 field hospital was located, the area has many museums, renowned for welcoming visitors of all ages, such the Memorial Museum Passchendaele 1917, Hooge Crater Museum and Talbot House, the everyman's club in Poperinge,

Stephen Lodewyck, Director of the In Flanders Fields Museum in Ypres says, "Since 2020 we miss our visitors from abroad, who travel to share their history with us on the former battlefields, under the Menin Gate during the Last Post and in the "In Flanders Fields Museum" in Ypres. But out of sight is not out of mind, on the contrary, during the lockdown investments and refurbishments have enhanced the attractions on offer.

Aside from WW1 history, Flanders Fields is also well known for being home to some of the best breweries in Belgium and some excellent chocolatiers. There are also numerous walking and cycling paths available for those looking for an active way to discover the region's history and landscapes.

Flanders Fields looks forward to welcoming you soon – whether it be a first time visit or to reconnect with the region.

VISITFLANDERS.COM

@flandersfields14_18

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

EYE-OPENER

Moving monument

A family of three cast in bronze, standing proud on a pile of suitcases, has been installed in London's Waterloo station as the National Windrush Monument. The statue – designed by Jamaican sculptor Basil Watson, and unveiled by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on Windrush Day, 22 June – commemorates the thousands of people from the Caribbean who arrived in the UK during the decades following the Second World War.

The so-called Windrush Generation – named after the ship that carried an early tranche of Caribbean people to Britain in 1948 – and their descendants helped rebuild the UK's war-ravaged economy and infrastructure, as well as contributing to its culture and healthcare, among other areas. Yet, as Prince William acknowledged, many encountered resentment and racism.

Some critics have questioned the choice of location, suggesting that the monument should instead have been installed in Windrush Square, Brixton where many of that first wave settled.

ALAMY

Have a story? Please email Matt Elton at matt.elton@immediate.co.uk

TALKING POINTS

Monumental debate

A proposal to create a new national monument honouring those who battled slavery unsurprisingly provoked some fiery Twitter exchanges. **ANNA WHITELOCK** reports on the wrangling

Writing in *The Times*, the **History Reclaimed** (@History_Reclaim) group of scholars made the case for creating "a prominent national monument" remembering "our many forebears, both celebrated and unknown, who fought tirelessly against slavery, sometimes at the cost of their lives. Among them would be William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson, Olaudah Equiano, Hannah More and thousands of men of the Royal Navy, politicians, missionaries, imperial and colonial administrators..."

Among very many Twitter responses, **Rich C** (@RCownie) commented – with faintly disguised irony – "it's going to be puzzling for future generations to find out that there was such a long and heroic and difficult struggle to end slavery when apparently no one started it, no one was in favour of it, and no one was doing it, and there weren't any slaves and they liked it anyway." **Dr Zareer Masani** (@Zareer Masani) replied that "we historians are very aware of the several millennia old slave trade… How does any of that stop us commemorating those who gave their lives to abolish it and police that (and not from Twitter armchairs)?". But as **Rich** (@RJS Hutton) tweeted, "the abolitionists listed already have monuments/recognition. That entire letter seems like a disingenuous attempt at pretending Britain's history of slavery is mitigated by abolition."

Chris Smith (@spy_historian) observed that "British mythology presents the empire, warts and all, as being uniquely benevolent. It wasn't." **The Real Normal Podcast** (@RealNormalPod) replied: "Not sure where you are living. Schools, universities, statues, maths courses, street names are all being 'de-colonised'. The [mainstream media] can't get enough of hammering our slave-trading past. I'd say that our national story is very balanced on the [positives and negatives] of empire – ie 'warts and all'." **Chris Smith** pushed back: "I live in the real world. Universities teach facts and analysis." His critic responded that "you see history through the ultra-woke, always anti-British viewpoint… destroying the academic credibility of our universities… I see the British empire as a huge complexity of positives and negatives all set in the historical context." In response, Smith wondered: "What are these 'positives'? Trains in India? I guess on the balance sheet that stacks up against the 4 million slaves transported across the Atlantic."

> **Monuments tell us more about the time they were erected than about the figures they represent**

Amos Parr (@ParrAmos) argued that "'monuments tell us far more about the time they were erected than they do about the historical figures they represent. Cromwell's statue outside parliament tells me more about British politics in 1899 than it does about the 17th century." He continued: "Any monument erected now about slavery simply tells future generations that the British still had hang-ups about it in 2022… It's this forcing people to feel national pride or shame over the past which is having such a negative impact. That's not my idea of history." And so the debate went on… H

Stamps depicting abolitionists Hannah More and Ignatius Sancho. A suggested monument to such figures sparked debate

Anna Whitelock is professor of the history of monarchy at City, University of London

Phan Thi Kim Phúc shows scars left by a napalm attack in Vietnam in 1972. She recently underwent what she hopes is her last laser skin treatment

VIETNAM WAR

Napalm victim has final skin treatment

The Vietnamese girl pictured in an infamous photograph showing her screaming and naked after napalm was dropped on her village by South Vietnamese troops has received the last in a series of laser skin treatments – 50 years after the attack that caused horrific burns to much of her body.

Captured by Vietnamese-American photographer Nick Ut in June 1972, the picture of the "Napalm Girl" – nine-year-old Phan Thi Kim Phúc – quickly became one of the best-known and most powerful images of the controversial conflict. Immediately after taking the photo, Ut rushed Kim Phúc to hospital, where she spent a year recovering from the immediate effects of the attack. She was, however, left in constant pain and with extensive scarring that restricted her movement. She later described her physical and mental suffering, and her feelings of shame about the photo.

Having moved to Canada in the 1990s, Kim Phúc received numerous interventions including a series of laser skin treatments. She hopes that the latest session, which she underwent in Miami in late June, will be her last.

"I am not a victim of war any more," she told Canadian broadcaster CBC. "I am a survivor. I feel like 50 years ago I was a victim of war, but 50 years later, I was a friend, a helper, a mother, a grandmother and a survivor calling out for peace." H

ALAMY/SHUTTERSTOCK

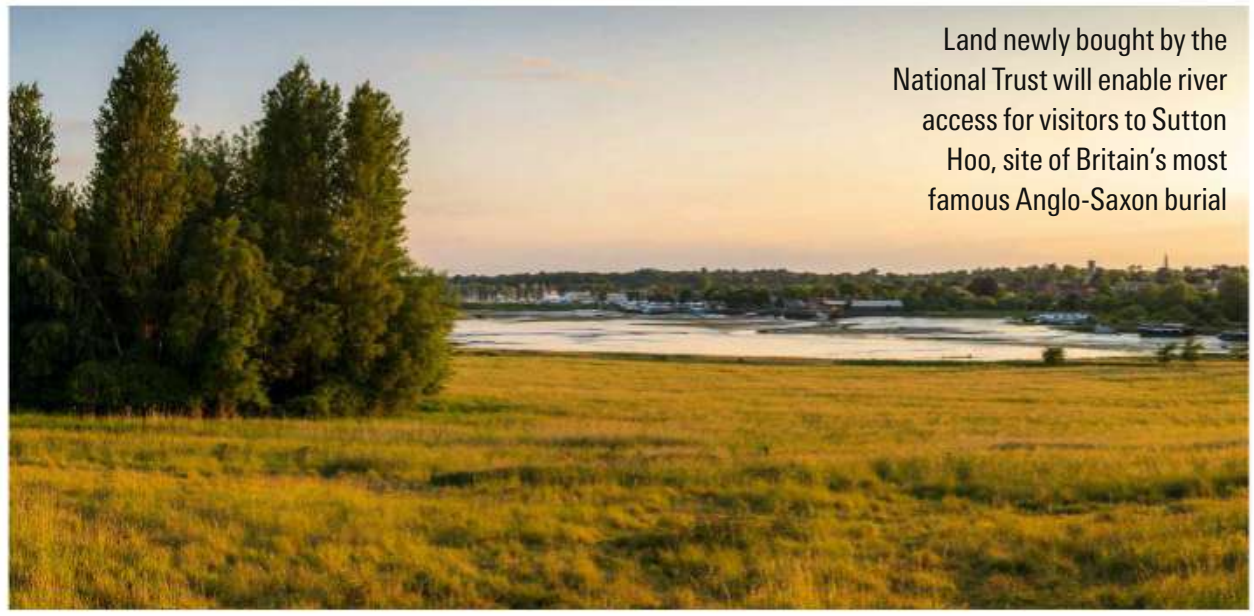
HISTORY IN THE NEWS

A selection of the stories hitting the **history headlines**

Ancient frog discovery baffles archaeologists

The discovery of the bones of some 8,000 frogs and toads alongside the site of an Iron Age roundhouse near Cambridge is puzzling experts. Zooarchaeologists from Museum of London Archaeology (Mola) did not find marks consistent with consumption by humans or other animals on the remains, recovered from a ditch at Bar Hill between 2016 and 2018. What, then, caused the mass die-off? The unfortunate amphibians may have perished of cold during hibernation, been killed by disease, or simply found themselves unable to climb out of the ditch after falling in. Mola experts hope that ongoing investigations on the finds will yet yield a conclusive answer.

The bones of thousands of frogs and toads at a site near Cambridge are mystifying experts



Land newly bought by the National Trust will enable river access for visitors to Sutton Hoo, site of Britain's most famous Anglo-Saxon burial

More Sutton Hoo landscape accessible to visitors

The acquisition of nearly 11 hectares of land by the National Trust at Sutton Hoo will greatly expand the area accessible to visitors when it opens to the public.

The site in Suffolk became famous after excavations of large mounds in 1939 uncovered a major ship burial containing an astonishing hoard of treasure and arms, most notably a fragmented metal helmet that has since become an icon of Anglo-Saxon archaeology. The site is believed to host the grave of a monarch, possibly King Rædwald of East Anglia.

The recently purchased land at Little Haugh will help visitors grasp the context of the burial, according to the National Trust. "Closer access to the river will help our visitors understand Sutton Hoo's position in the landscape," said property operations manager Allison Girling. "Visitors will be able to enjoy views of the estuary and Woodbridge across the water, where a full-size replica of the Sutton Hoo ship is currently being constructed."

It's hoped the newly acquired land will be open to visitors next spring.

Germany returns Benin Bronzes to Nigeria

Two Benin Bronzes have been handed over to Nigeria by Germany as part of an agreement transferring the ownership of hundreds of artefacts currently held by five German museums.

The items – a sculpture depicting the head of an 18th-century *oba* (king) and a 16th-century relief depicting an *oba* with companions – are among hundreds of objects looted in 1897 by British forces from the kingdom of Benin, in what's now Nigeria. Many of the stolen artefacts were sold to museums in North America and Europe over the following years, with some now held even farther afield.

The handover of the two bronzes in July marked the signing of an agreement to return to Nigerian ownership around 1,100 items taken from west Africa during the colonial era. The physical return of the remaining artefacts is the subject of negotiations, and some may remain on display in Germany.

Following campaigning over many years, a number of Benin Bronzes have already been returned to Nigeria, including two from Aberdeen University and Jesus College, Cambridge in 2021. However, the British Museum has stated that it will not return more than 900 objects from Benin in its collection, citing government acts that it says prohibit such handovers.

German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock hands over two Benin bronzes to Nigeria's culture minister, Lai Mohammed, in Berlin

Pregnant tortoise discovered amid ruins of Pompeii

An unexpected victim of the cataclysmic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79 has been unearthed: a pregnant tortoise. When the remains of the unfortunate reptile were discovered in June, experts were surprised to find an egg inside the partly crushed shell. The tortoise may have been looking for a place to lay her egg beneath the ruins of a building destroyed by an earthquake in AD 62. It was then covered by ash and rocks emitted by the volcano when it erupted, engulfing Pompeii's ill-fated inhabitants – both human and animal.

DREAMTIME/NATIONAL TRUST - JUSTIN MINES/ALAMY/SHUTTERSTOCK

Why PMs get the push

Boris Johnson's announcement that he is set to resign as prime minister threw the British government into turmoil in July – and saw him join a small group of PMs brought down by scandal. **RICHARD TOYE** explores what we can learn from the demise of previous premiers

Boris Johnson's fall as prime minister early in July was spectacular. It was forced, not by any formal vote, but instead by the resignation of dozens of ministers and aides following a series of damaging political scandals. Indeed, the number of resignations was so great that, had Johnson not quickly reversed his refusal to step down, the business of government might have ground to a halt. In keeping with Johnson's taboo-breaking career, the cascade of ministerial departures was unprecedented – but history shows us that the enforced termination of a premier's occupancy of Downing Street is a much more commonplace occurrence.

Of the 20 men and women who have held the keys to Number 10 since the First World War and the dawn of the era of mass enfranchisement, only six have had their prime ministerial careers cut short as the direct result of losing a general election. There are four main reasons that the others found themselves in that position: personal choice, scandal, national crises, and internal party politics.

A prime minister going out at the moment of their own choosing is relatively rare. Stanley Baldwin succeeded in retiring in 1937 on a wave of affection, having steered the country through the crisis sparked by the abdication of Edward VIII. Harold Wilson stunned the political world in 1976 when he stood down, unforced, at the age of 60. And Winston Churchill – on whom Johnson models himself – held on as long as he could during his second term despite his age and increasing infirmity, much to the frustration of his cabinet colleagues. Despite both Churchill and Johnson having faced national crises caused by the Second World War and the coronavirus pandemic, respectively, Johnson's response was undermined in the eyes of some by the revelation that he had broken his own lockdown rules. Churchill withstood serious moments of political danger before his defeat at the 1945 election, but

Waving goodbye Harold Macmillan waves to well-wishers outside hospital, days after bowing out as prime minister in October 1963

End of an era Boris Johnson announces his resignation as leader of the Conservative party on 7 July. He is set to stay on as PM until his replacement is announced later in the summer

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

Out of office
David Lloyd George, pictured with his wife Margaret, after resigning as PM in October 1922. The leader was dogged by scandals throughout his time in office

these were caused by military reversals, not because his personal integrity had been called into question.

The band that Johnson joins in being increasingly undermined by scandal is also quite small. Liberal prime minister David Lloyd George, for instance, had – to put it mildly – a colourful private life. In addition to other liaisons, he had a long-lasting affair with his secretary, Frances Stevenson. But his wife stuck by him, and according to the codes of the time this made the "Welsh Wizard" safe from press exposure. His willingness to sell honours to raise party funds became public knowledge in 1922, the last year of his premiership. This was not illegal, however, and although it made him look disreputable it was not the direct cause of his fall. Only when he appeared to risk war with Turkey over control of the Anatolian city of Çanakkale did Conservative MPs rebel against their leader, Austen Chamberlain, thus bringing an end to the coalition that Lloyd George headed.

Forty years later, the 1963 Profumo affair was damaging to Harold Macmillan, not because he knew about this sordid story of sex in high places, but rather because he was naively ignorant of it. Macmillan's resignation soon after was caused by a health scare, albeit at a time when he was already politically weakened.

A drama out of a crisis

National crises have also caused PMs to get the push. Neville Chamberlain was a popular prime minister from the point he took office in 1937, and remained so after the outbreak of the Second World War. He became vulnerable after the 1940 Nazi invasion of Norway, and the botched British reaction, called his leadership into question. The parliamentary debate-cum-inquest of that May was the stuff of legend. Chamberlain misplayed his hand by appealing to his "friends in the House" – which looked like partisanship in place of patriotism. The Conservative backbencher Leo Amery turned the knife by quoting Oliver Cromwell's 1653 address to parliament: "Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go." Although the government was not defeated in the vote that followed, its majority fell drastically. This was a signal that Chamberlain needed to reconstruct his government to make it broader-based and more effective – a task that he found impossible, partly because Labour refused to join a coalition with him at the head. The party's leaders were, however, prepared to serve under Churchill. On 10 May, when the wheels were in motion, Chamberlain briefly tried to cling on, pointing to Germany's invasion that morning of France and the Low Countries. He was quickly dissuaded: his attempt to defy political gravity did not reach what we might term Johnsonian levels.

Anthony Eden, Conservative PM from 1955, resigned quickly after the Suez crisis of the following year. He was genuinely suffering from ill

"There are four main reasons prime ministers have found themselves in this position: personal choice, scandal, national crises and internal politics"

ALAMY

A tearful farewell Margaret Thatcher leaves Downing Street for the last time, 28 November 1990. Growing unpopularity and political divisions contributed to her resignation

ALAMY

health, but had this not been the case it is hard to see how he could have long carried on in the wake of the catastrophic defeat of his foreign policy.

Prime target

Margaret Thatcher, by contrast, is an example of a prime minister brought down neither by scandal nor international crisis, but by internal politics. During 1990, she faced growing domestic difficulties and problems within the Conservative party to which she herself had contributed. She was not toppled as the result of what Johnson referred to in his resignation speech as "the herd instinct". Rather, MPs had had a long time to reflect on the prime minister's growing unpopularity and seemingly stubborn pursuit of widely disliked policies such as the Poll Tax. Ideological divisions over Europe certainly played a part, but Conservatives were up against the reality of looming electoral defeat – unless they could get rid of her. When her deputy, Geoffrey Howe, resigned in November 1990, giving a devastating Commons explanation of the reasons, the ambitious Michael Heseltine seized the chance to challenge her in a leadership contest.

> **"Divisions over Europe played a part in Thatcher's downfall, but the Tories were up against the reality of looming electoral defeat – unless they could get rid of her"**

Thatcher won the first round, but not by enough votes to prevent a second. Following the advice of many colleagues, she announced her resignation rather than risk a formal defeat. It was her chancellor, John Major, who finally seized the crown, going on to win a surprise general election victory in 1992. This suggested that the calculus of the Tory MPs who moved to overthrow Thatcher had been correct – at least in the short term. Yet the sense of betrayal among Thatcher's supporters generated a poisonous atmosphere within the party. This helps explain the fact that, in the years since her fall, Tory MPs have so frequently challenged and even overthrown their leaders.

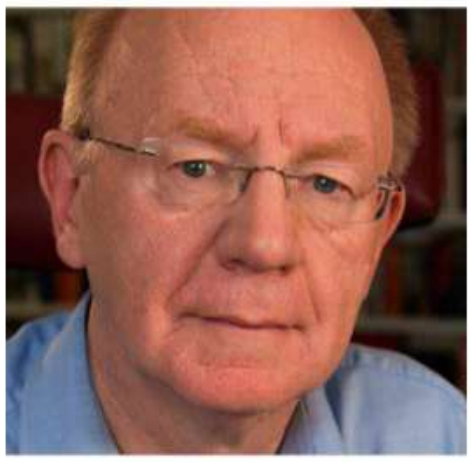
Finally, Clement Attlee deserves a mention, as a prime minister who saw off an attempted putsch. In 1947, a year of economic crisis, he was visited by Sir Stafford Cripps, his president of the Board of Trade. Cripps told him that he, Attlee, should become chancellor, and that Ernest Bevin, the foreign secretary, should become prime minister in his place. In Cripps's presence, Attlee rang up Bevin, who denied wanting to leave his existing job. Attlee then offered Cripps a new role – that of minister of economic affairs. Cripps took it, and Attlee stayed at Number 10 until defeated in a general election four years later.

There may be a lesson for our next prime minister here: if you want to survive, low-key power-play may be a better technique than histrionic last-stand resistance. But it must be admitted that today's politics, with the constant pressures of 24-hour news and social media, are rougher than those of the 1940s. Leadership challenges are no longer a weapon of last resort, but rather the normal currency of modern Westminster. It may be that some parliamentarians are pondering the possibility of a new one even before the next prime minister has crossed the threshold of Downing Street.

Richard Toye is professor of history at the University of Exeter. His books include *Winston Churchill: A Life in the News* (Oxford University Press, 2020)

HISTORY EXTRA MASTERCLASS

The Holocaust
with Laurence Rees



Laurence Rees is a historian, award-winning documentary filmmaker and author. His books include *Auschwitz: The Nazis and the 'Final Solution'* (BBC Books, 2005) and *The Holocaust: A New History* (Viking, 2017), which was a *Sunday Times* bestseller and described by *The Telegraph* as "the best single-volume account of the atrocity ever written".

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MICHAEL WOOD ON...
THE CLIMATE CRISIS

"What we did before in ignorance, we now do in full knowledge"

On 24 March 1768, Gilbert White, an English country vicar at Selborne in Hampshire, made an ominous note in his diary. It was the first intimation (apparently in world literature) of what is now the greatest crisis for all life on the planet: the climate crisis. White recorded an occurrence already well known to local farmers of a stinking airborne pollution known as "the Blue Smoke" or the "London Smoke".

These mists, he commented, "have a strong smell and are supposed to occasion blights in crops… They have the smell of coal smoke and therefore are supposed to come from London as they always come to us with a NE wind." Sometimes White notes the presence of "smut" in the wheat fields, or small flakes of black coal soot. Over the following 20 years, the signs grew more frequent.

White's great account, *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* – which he described as "a meditation on the Book of Nature" – was published in 1789. It has been in print ever since. But here in White's book, in the very place enshrined in our literature as the image of unchanging bucolic rural England, is a glimpse of our future. It comes at the moment historians now identify as the lift-off of the industrial revolution; the time now referred to as the "Great Divergence", a turning point when Britain's economy overtook Qing China in the second half of the 18th century and when the nation began to burn coal on what can only be called an industrial scale. The triumph of the west was built on many things: imperialism, conquest of the New World, and slavery among them. But it was powered by coal.

The roots of the climate crisis, then, can be observed far back in history. The link between coal burning and global warming was first made in 1859, when the Irish scientist John Tyndall established the connection between atmospheric CO2 and what we know as the "greenhouse effect". Then, in 1896, Swedish chemist Svante Arrhenius made the first quantitative prediction of global warming, calculating that human-caused CO2 emissions from fossil-fuel burning and combustion processes would heat the planet. The implications were picked up by newspapers 100 years ago: that unchecked rising temperatures could be disastrous "in a few centuries time…". Like every prediction on climate change, this was a gross underestimate.

So could the rate of global warming be pegged precisely to the increase of CO2 in the Earth's atmosphere? In 1958, the American scientist Charles Keeling began a series of measurements at Mauna Loa Observatory on Hawaii to monitor the accumulation of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The run of readings through the 1960s and 70s showed the first significant unequivocal evidence of rapidly increasing CO2 levels due to the burning of fossil fuels. Since it is a greenhouse gas, this had massive implications for global warming. The Keeling Curve's visual record of the rise is one of the most important scientific works of the 20th century.

So, by the late 1980s, the science was clear. In 1988, the chief climate scientist at Nasa, James Hansen, famously broke ranks to warn a US Senate committee of the impending catastrophe during his Congressional testimony on climate change. But since then, there has been a massive and systematic effort by the oil industry and the military-industrial complex, and their political backers, to deny the science. These are the Men who Sold the World. They have encouraged and supported climate deniers, who are still prevalent. But to deny the climate science has meant that 30 years have been lost in seeking and implementing a solution, especially during the 1990s when massive action could have crucially turned the tide.

In the intervening time, the vast coal-driven nations of China and India have been on the rise, and since the 1980s we have pumped out more CO2 than in the whole of previous human history. What we did before the 1980s in ignorance, we now do in full knowledge of the damage being done.

Such is the shape of history. Our old world, the one we have inhabited since the Neolithic Revolution 12,000 years ago, and the Bronze Age urban revolution 5,000 years ago, has ended; the climate system that raised Homo sapiens is over. We are in a new geological epoch, which entered the Oxford English Dictionary in 2014: the Anthropocene. What is left to us is a frighteningly shrinking timescale to mitigate what in vulnerable parts of the world such as the Horn of Africa already looks like calamity. If massive change is not achieved this decade – cutting fossil fuel emissions by half by 2030 – then the outcome will likely be catastrophic. Gilbert White would not have believed it.

Michael Wood is professor of public history at the University of Manchester. He has presented numerous BBC series, and his most recent book is an updated version of *In Search of the Dark Ages* (BBC, 2022). His Twitter handle is @mayavision

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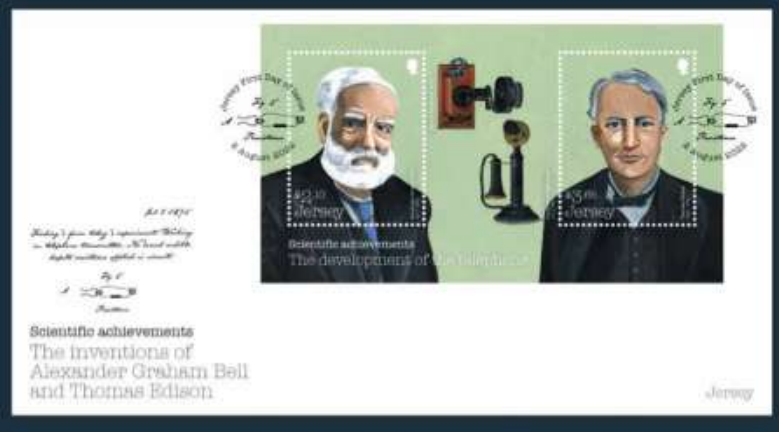

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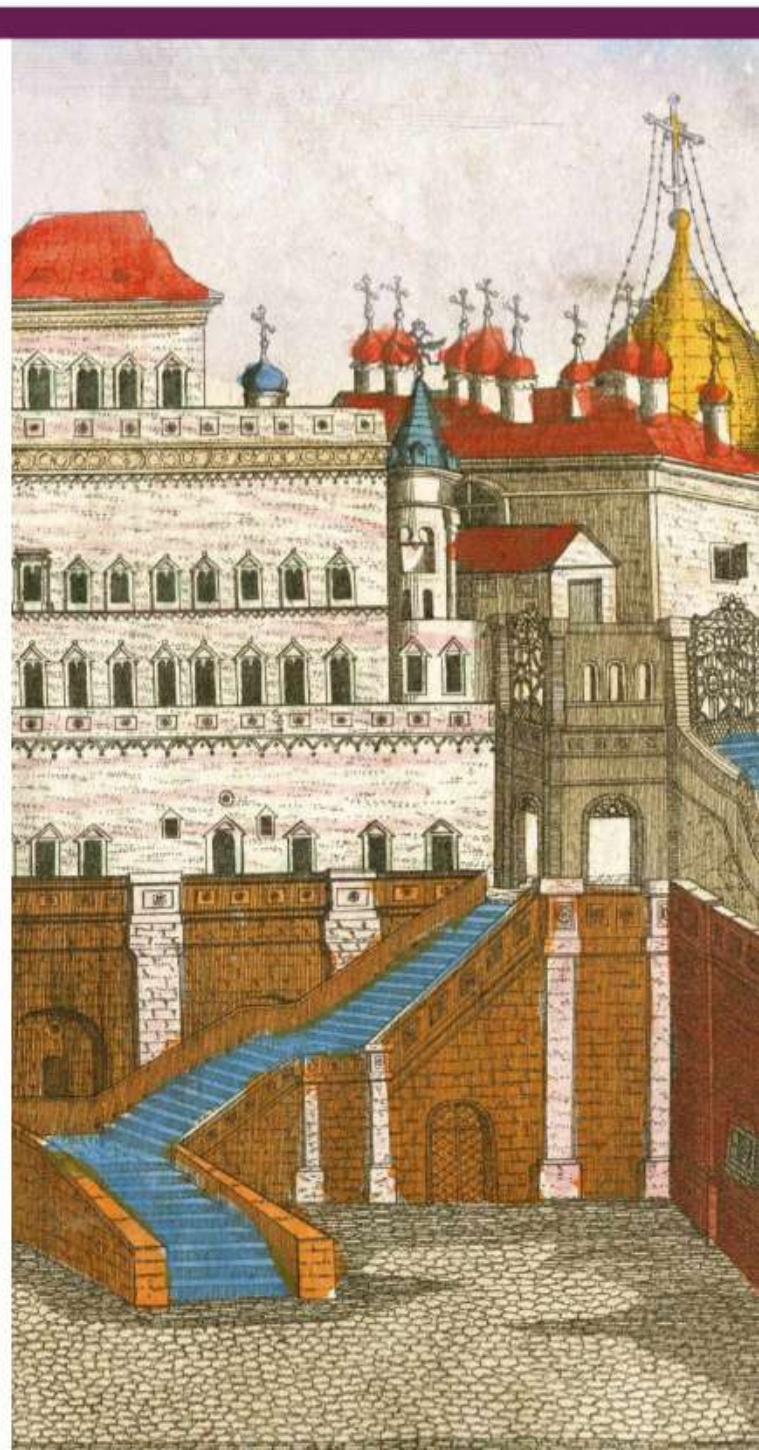

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ANNIVERSARIES

HELEN CARR highlights events that took place in September in history

21 SEPTEMBER 1327

Edward II dies in mysterious circumstances

The overthrown king may have been murdered while in prison

During the night of 23–24 September 1327, the young Edward III received a messenger informing him that his father, the former king who had been forced to abdicate earlier that year, had died two days ago. Edward II was being held prisoner at Berkeley Castle in Gloucestershire on the orders of Roger Mortimer, who had seized power in England with his lover, Edward's queen, Isabella, and ruled in the name of her teenage son, the new king.

The circumstances were mysterious, if not suspicious, and have been the subject of debate ever since. It has even been mooted that Edward escaped Berkeley and died in Europe several years later. While some contemporary chroniclers believed that he had died of natural causes, a "grief induced illness", "starvation" and "strangulation" were also suggested.

One record at the Court of the King's Bench in 1331 – the year after Mortimer had been arrested, tried and executed – stated: "William Ockley and the others who had Edward in their custody treacherously slew and murdered Edward, the father of our lord the king, in destruction of the royal blood."

The most enduring theory was that Edward was impaled by a red-hot spit in his anus. This has its origins in part of the c1333 Brut Chronicle and was accepted as truth for centuries, but is now generally dismissed.

The great seal of Edward II, whose 1327 death remains a subject of speculation

The cloisters of Salisbury Cathedral, the largest of any cathedral in Britain and a key feature in what makes Salisbury a masterpiece of early English Gothic architecture

GETTY IMAGES/DREAMSTIME

The Fighting Temeraire, by JMW Turner (1839): a steam tug hauls the aged warship to the breaker's yard

5 SEPTEMBER 1838

HMS *Temeraire*, the 98-gun hero of the battle of Trafalgar in 1805, is hauled up the Thames to be broken up for scrap. The ship's final voyage inspires JMW Turner to paint one of his greatest works.

29 SEPTEMBER 1258

Salisbury Cathedral is consecrated

The ceremony finalises the cathedral's historic move to a new location

The sacred consecration ceremony for the new Salisbury Cathedral was one of the most important religious events of 1258. King Henry III, queen Eleanor and princes Edward and Edmund attended the service, led by Archbishop Boniface, to dedicate to God this master-piece of early English Gothic architecture (minus the spire, which was not completed until 1320). It had been nearly four decades since the foundation stones were laid, in 1220, but the history of a cathedral in that area in Wiltshire started much earlier, during the 11th century.

In the years after the Norman Conquest, construction on the original cathedral began under the auspices of Bishop Herman on the site of an Iron Age hill fort, Old Sarum. It was consecrated in 1092 and added to over the following century, but eventually the decision was made to move to a location two miles away. There, it would be better protected from the elements and have easier access to water. Relations with the castle garrison at the Old Sarum settlement had also wors-ened. Legend has it that the bishop shot an arrow in the direction he intended to build the new cathedral and hit a deer. The site there-fore sits, allegedly, on the exact spot where the animal died.

While the magnificent edifice was being erected, using stones from the old cathedral and a nearby quarry, the town of New Sarum grew. It received a royal charter to become a city, Salisbury, in 1227. The consecration ceremony of the cathedral in September 1258 put Salisbury on the map as an important religious centre in the western world, marked by a Feast of the Dedication every year until the dissolution of the monasteries. Salisbury also holds the honour of being the only cathedral in England's history to have moved.

David, carved by Italian Renaissance master Michelangelo between 1501 and 1504

8 SEPTEMBER 1504

Michelangelo's 5-metre-high marble sculpture of **David is unveiled to the public in Florence, Italy**, 40 years – and three artists – after it was first commissioned.

ILLUSTRATION BY **LYNN HATZIUS**

2 SEPTEMBER 1859

A dramatic solar storm lights up the Earth

The "Carrington Event" causes auroras and telegraph chaos

When British amateur astronomer Richard Carrington went into his private observatory, connected to his home near London, shortly before noon on 1 September 1859, he intended to sketch sunspots. But his attention was seized by something he had never seen before on the Sun: "two patches of intensely bright and white light". Carrington – and at the same time, fellow astronomer Richard Hodgson – had just witnessed a massive solar flare. It lasted only a few minutes, but the subatomic particles it hurled at Earth would cause the greatest recorded geomagnetic storm in history, peaking the next day.

The storm, now known as the Carrington Event, lit up the sky as if it were on fire and caused colourful and intense auroras, which occur near the poles, to be seen around the world. The northern lights (Aurora Borealis) were visible as far south as the Caribbean, while the southern lights (Aurora Australis) were observed in Santiago, Chile. The spectacular display of bright lights continued throughout the night, with reports of people reading their newspapers without artificial illumination and people getting up and ready for work hours too early.

The more severe consequence was that the electromagnetic radiation wreaked havoc with technology, especially the thousands of miles of telegraph communication lines around the world. The colossal surge of energy caused systems to fail, fires to break out and sparks to shower from telegraph machines. The atmosphere had become so charged that a bizarre phenomenon occurred: some operators reported that they were able to send and receive messages even after disconnecting their power supply, using only the "auroral current".

According to late 20th-century analysis of ice core samples, which would have been ionised by the solar particles, the Carrington Event was the most intense geomagnetic storm for 500 years. If one of similar size happened today in a world reliant on technology more sophisticated than the telegraph, the impact could be catastrophic.

DREAMTIME

Noor Inayat Khan is celebrated as one of the female Muslim heroes of the Second World War. She posthumously received the George Cross in 1949

13 SEPTEMBER 1944

Noor Inayat Khan is executed at a concentration camp

The SOE agent had chosen to stay in Nazi-occupied France

At dawn on 13 (or possibly 12) September 1944, four women were led into a yard in Dachau concentration camp, where they were told to kneel and had their death sentences read to them. SS men then stepped forward and shot them one at a time in the back of their necks. One of the women had been badly beaten first, but in her final moments managed to utter the single word "liberté".

Her name was Noor Inayat Khan. Having escaped German-occupied France in 1940, she trained for the British forces and later gained a post in the Special Operations Executive (SOE) as a wireless operator. In June 1943, Noor was inserted into France on a highly dangerous mission to aid the "Prosper" resistance network, under the codename "Madeleine". She chose to stay even when the Germans rounded up the network's agents, but was betrayed and arrested by the Gestapo four months later.

After several escapes and recaptures, Noor – who refused to give up anything in her interrogations – was sent to Dachau with three other SOE agents, Madeleine Damerment, Yolande Beekman and Eliane Plewman. After being executed, they were stripped and searched for jewellery. For displaying "the most conspicuous courage, both moral and physical", Noor was posthumously awarded the George Cross in 1949. H

BRIDGEMAN/GETTY IMAGES

Helen Carr is a historian and writer. Her latest book is *The Red Prince* (Oneworld, 2021)

WHY WE SHOULD REMEMBER...

60 YEARS AGO

Love Me Do, the first single recorded by the Beatles

BY **ALWYN TURNER**

What do we know about the recording of *Love Me Do*?
For such a basic song, their debut single proved difficult to record, in the end requiring 15 takes to get right. Even then, their producer George Martin wasn't convinced, so a week later the band did yet another recording, this time with a session drummer replacing Ringo Starr. On the best-known version of the single, Ringo's on tambourine.

How was the song received?
Released in Britain on 5 October 1962, the record was eventually a hit, but it was a slow process and struggled to a peak position of #17 in the last week of the year. Things were different in the United States. *Love Me Do* wasn't released there until the Beatles were already famous, so it quickly became their fourth #1 single.

Was *Love Me Do* important in the Beatles' rise to fame?
It was a calling card, for the industry as much as the public. The single was the start of the Beatles getting on the radio and television, and their name in the papers, if only in a small way.

What does the song represent in their musical development?
Musically and lyrically, *Love Me Do* was primitive at best – it's striking how few cover versions there have been – but that was its charm. At a time when a lot of British pop came with strings and anonymous backing vocals, this was unvarnished: the essence of pop. And at its core were two frontmen, John Lennon and Paul McCartney, singing harmonies in a style they had learned from the Everly Brothers. Despite the experimentation to come for the Beatles, it was always about the voices.

Artists at the time weren't expected to write their own material, and with that in mind Martin had wanted the first single to be *How Do You Do It*? (later a #1 single hit for Gerry and the Pacemakers). The Beatles refused. *Love Me Do* wasn't much of a song, but it was theirs, and that overthrew conventions.

Why should we remember the Beatles' debut single today?
If the Beatles never released another record, *Love Me Do* would have long since been forgotten. But it has its place in history due to what happened next: Beatlemania, conquering the US, and the reinvention of popular music. Beyond the actual music, there was the fact that the Beatles were so omnipresent that they came to symbolise the social and cultural revolutions of the 1960s. Britain, and the world, was a different place after the Beatles. "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," goes the Chinese proverb. *Love Me Do* was that step. H

The Beatles (l-r: Ringo Starr, John Lennon, Paul McCartney and George Harrison) pose backstage at a concert in the early sixties

Alwyn Turner is a writer specialising in the political and cultural history of Britain in the 20th century

LETTERS

David Frost with Richard Nixon, 1977. Reader Charlotte Cornish lauds the duo's TV clash of that year

LETTER OF THE MONTH

A stellar career

After reading your feature *A Space Menagerie* (March) I thought your readers and the author, Stephen Walker, would be pleased to know that Miss Baker [the squirrel monkey who was fired into space in 1959] lived a long life as a star at the US Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama. There she inspired, entertained and educated generations of visitors until she died in November 1984. She was a beloved celebrity and received between 100 and 150 letters from schoolchildren every day.

Even though I personally have had the privilege of meeting astronauts from the Mercury, Gemini, Apollo and Space Shuttle programmes, I have always remembered fondly that Miss Baker was the first "space traveller" I ever met.

She is laid to rest in front of the visitors' centre at the US Space & Rocket Center, where to this day you are sure to find her favourite treats, bananas and strawberry gelatin, left at her grave by visitors in continued tribute to her contribution to space exploration.

Mark E Sapp, Florida

The grave of Miss Baker, a monkey sent into space in 1959. Reader Mark E Sapp fondly recalls an encounter with the simian star

We reward the *Letter of the Month* writer with a copy of a new history book. This issue, that is **Henrietta Maria: Conspirator, Warrior, Phoenix Queen** by Leanda de Lisle. You can read our interview with Leanda on page 78

Dogged by scandal

In regard to Clifford Williamson's feature on Watergate (July), it is interesting to note that this was not the first time that US president Richard Nixon had been embroiled in scandal during his political career.

In 1952, Nixon was implicated in the Slush Fund scandal, in which he was accused of secretly accepting funds from rich Californian businessmen. Nixon's televised response to the scandal was known as the "Checkers address" – the name deriving from Nixon's admission in his speech that he had received the political gift of a black-and-white cocker spaniel named Checkers.

This address saved his political career but, as Williamson touched upon, TV did Nixon few favours during the Watergate scandal, with the media instead working to increase the pressures on him that ultimately led to his resignation. This is evidenced by a series of interviews held between Nixon and British journalist David Frost in 1977, which offer an insight into how Nixon attempted to justify Watergate.

They are highly recommended viewing for anyone who wants to understand more about Nixon's response to the affair.

Charlotte Cornish, Telford

A vital contribution

Kavita Puri's recent article on the role of Indian soldiers in the First World War (*Hidden Histories*, July) reminded me of a comment I heard years ago as a student: that, had it not been for the six-figure number of Indian troops that the empire was able to muster at a moment's notice in 1914, Britain would have lost the war within a year.

There certainly was enthusiasm among the British people to join up and leave what was, for many, great poverty – but their parlous state of health meant that only four out of every ten were deemed able to fight. Two out of ten could "fetch and carry", and the rest were sent home.

Over the years, that statement stuck in my mind and, today, I find I am more than ready to believe that the contribution the troops from India made, especially in the first year of conflict, was critical and worthy of more than a footnote in history.

Jo Jones, Darlington

Speech and drama

Your article on *EastEnders* (*BBC at 100*, August) brought to mind an observation I made a long time ago. I have lived in west London for decades, and working-class women's accents have changed significantly in that time, which I put down to the influence of the soap.

I wonder if readers have noticed similar changes in the other parts of London? Indeed, is the *EastEnders* accent itself authentic? I have not noticed any changes in male accents, and indeed can still recognise a man from Battersea by his accent.

Aleister Smith, Ealing

Visualising the past

I am so glad that your feature on the history of tourism at Hadrian's Wall [*Frontier Tourists*, August] included a reconstruction of Hadrian's Wall by the late artist Alan Sorrell, the earliest of the "official" reconstruction artists in Britain.

From the 1930s on, Sorrell worked with archaeologists to complete carefully researched pictures, but it was not until 1956 that he caught the attention of the Ministry of Works, now English Heritage. Prior to this date, it had been the deliberate policy of the Ministry of Works not to have any artist's reconstructions on display at any monument in its care, as they were only informed guesses. But in 1957, Lord Molson gave his seal of approval in the House of Commons:

"The Ministry of Works are anxious to enable the general public to visualise what ancient monuments looked like in the days when they were in use. Mr Alan Sorrell has therefore been employed to carry out drawings and has received the advice of the Ministry's architects and archaeologists. There can, of course, be no assurance that the reconstructions are accurate in detail, but it is believed they give a fair impression of what the buildings must have looked like."

Sorrell went on to produce a series of wonderfully evocative reconstructions, and indeed was working on his reconstructions

GETTY IMAGES

A depiction of Hadrian's Wall by reconstruction artist Alan Sorrell. Reader Tony Pitman praises Sorrell's "wonderfully evocative" images

British Indian Army troops attack German fighters in this illustration. Reader Jo Jones highlights the key role of soldiers from India in Britain's First World War effort

of Roman London (in the Museum of London) when he sadly died in 1974.
Tony Pitman, Wiltshire

The evolution of the revolution

Hugh Canham (*Letters*, July) raises an interesting point about the American Revolution trumping the French Revolution in deposing a wannabe despotic monarch. I shall trump you one further, Hugh: the English Revolution of 1642–60 surely serves as a template for both America and France with regard to what happens to an oppressive and unjust government. Now for someone to trump me one further...
Ryan Craze, Bedford

Corrections

- As reader Igor Glikin has pointed out, a photo on page 55 of the July issue (*Russia's Doomed Revolution*) purporting to show Lenin and Trotsky is actually of Lenin and Yakov Sverdlov, who was chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

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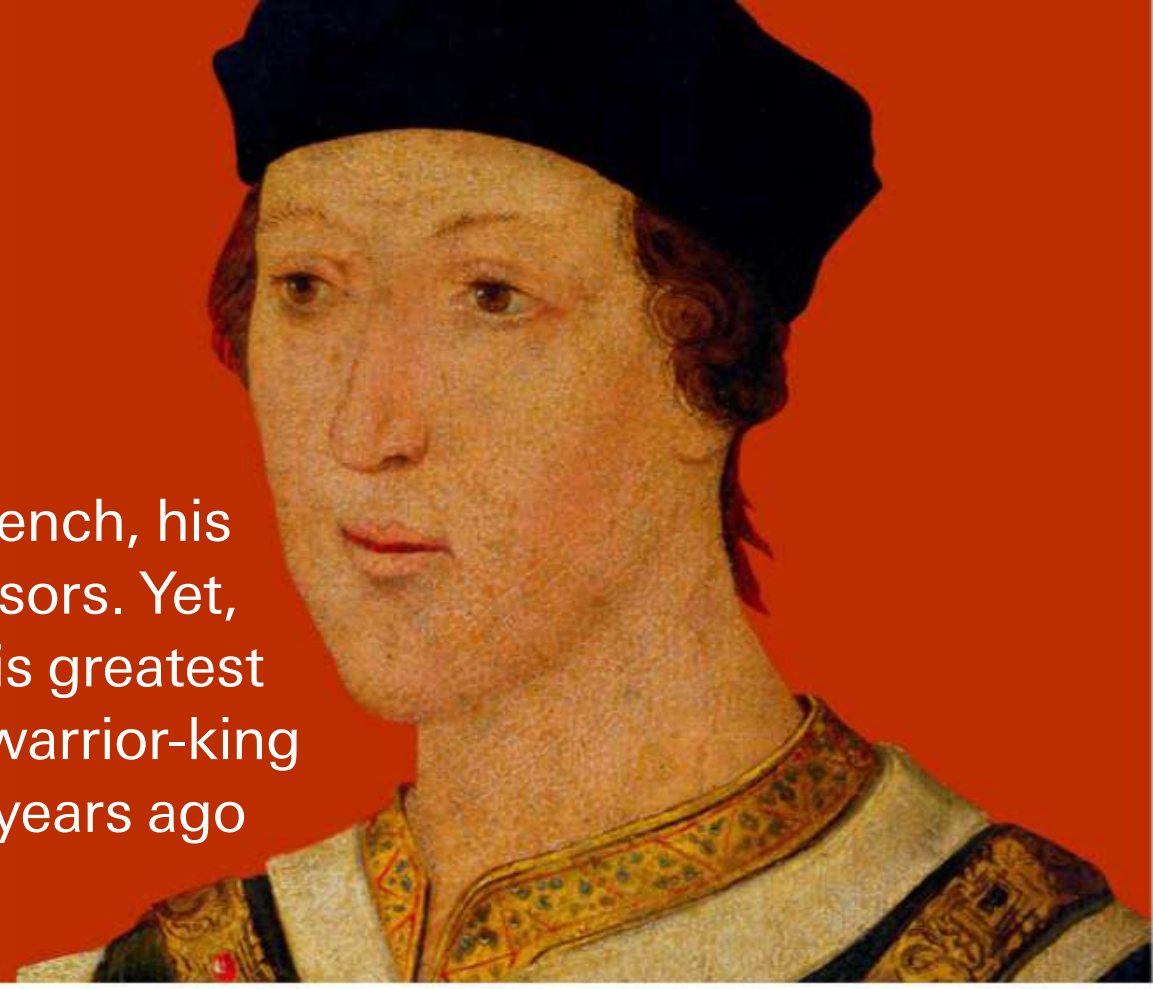


Henry VI fell foul of the French, his soldiers, even his own advisors. Yet, writes **Lauren Johnson**, his greatest enemy was the revered warrior-king who left him the throne 600 years ago

Want to know why Henry VI's

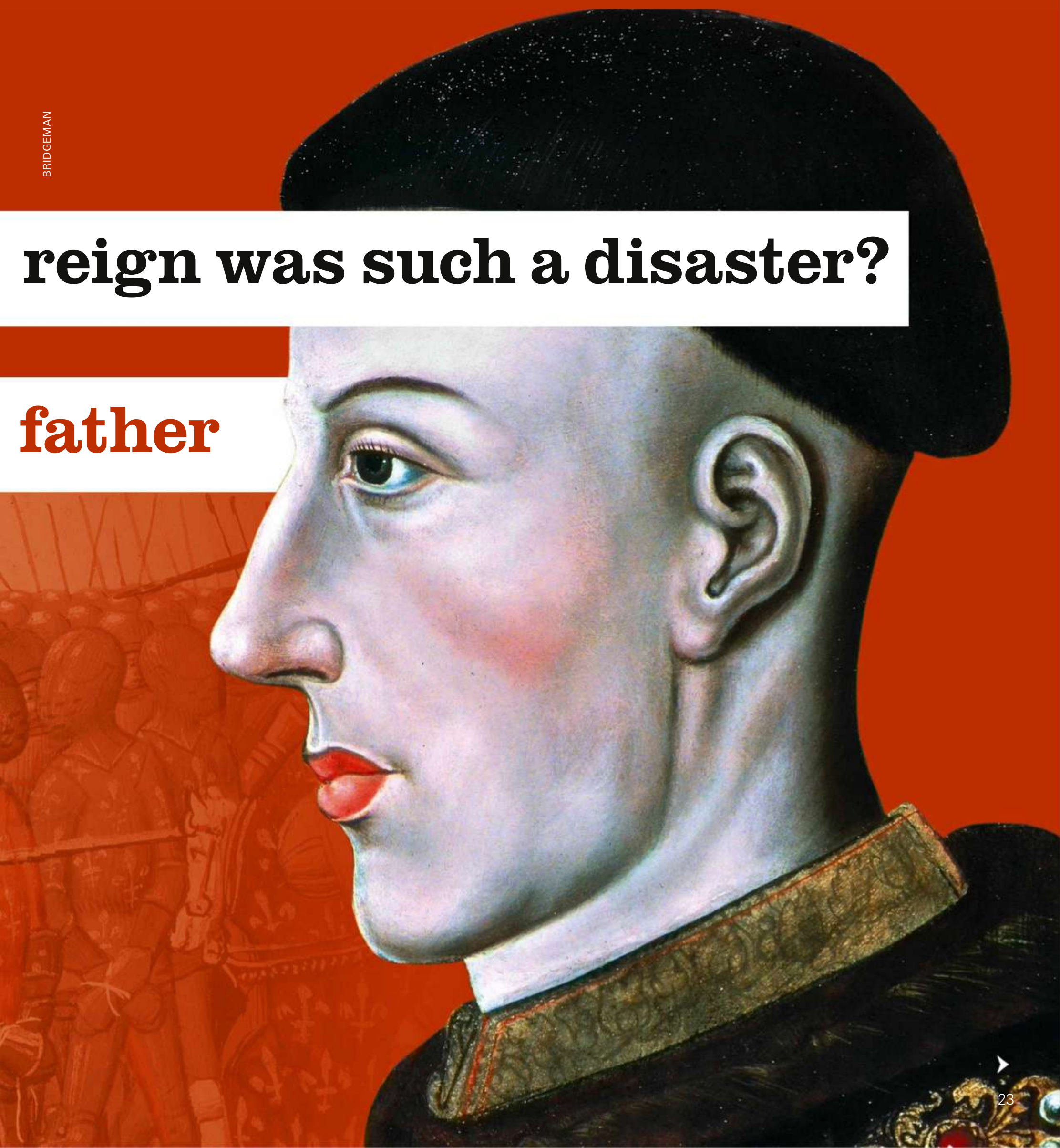
Then look no further than his

Tough act to follow
King Henry V, shown below. His hapless successor, Henry VI, is depicted (left) in a c1535 portrait. The son was unwilling and unable to emulate the father's greatest military triumph, at Agincourt, shown below left in a 15th-century manuscript

BRIDGEMAN

reign was such a disaster?

father



In Westminster Abbey, the tomb of Henry V is hard to miss. Towering above the mosaic-encrusted tomb of St Edward the Confessor and his royal successors, for centuries Henry's final resting place was topped by a shield, helm and warhorse's saddle. All are symbols of the martial glory of a man many still consider to be the best English king of the Middle Ages.

Meanwhile, in the Lady Chapel behind, tucked away and noticed by almost no one, is a small wooden pew-end representing Henry V's successor, and only child, Henry VI. Can anything more aptly demonstrate the reputations of this father and son? Henry V loomed over his offspring from the grave, and in his father's shadow Henry VI grew up stunted, emotionally and politically.

On the 600th anniversary of his death, Henry V's triumphs are still rehearsed in productions of the eponymous Shakespeare play. His appears to be the ultimate underdog success story. Eldest son of a Lancastrian usurper, Henry V united England to claim the French throne, overcame substantial odds to win the battle of Agincourt, and was rewarded at the Treaty of Troyes in 1420, where he was named heir to the French kingdom and married Princess Catherine of Valois. Revered as "the flower in his time of Christian chivalry", he died on campaign, aged 35 in 1422, leaving a nine-month-old son who shortly after was proclaimed King Henry VI, of England and France.

Henry V loomed over his son from the grave, and in this shadow, Henry VI grew up emotionally and politically stunted

Henry VI's life also gained Shakespeare's attention, but in the three plays bearing his name he is an insubstantial figure with few lines, completely overshadowed by more dynamic characters, chief among them his queen, Margaret of Anjou. Where Henry V's reign is a litany of triumphs, his son's reads like a top trumps of failure: he lost the Hundred Years' War and the Wars of the Roses, was twice imprisoned by his Yorkist rivals and died, almost certainly murdered, in the Tower of London shortly after his only child had been hacked to death in battle.

But if we peer beyond the lustre of the father and misfortune of the son, a more complicated image emerges: there is much to praise in the character and priorities of Henry VI, and a good deal reprehensible in the actions of Henry V. Most damningly of all, many of the failings of Henry VI can be traced back to his father. Although Henry VI reaped a bitter harvest for his people, it was Henry V who sowed the seed.

Lover and fighter

The defining difference between Henrys V and VI can be summed up in a single word: warfare. Henry V was first and foremost a soldier, witness to military campaigns from the time he was 11 and left with a disfiguring scar when struck in the face by an arrow in his first battle, aged 16. The primary focus of his energies was gaining the French throne by military force.

Henry VI, by contrast, was an out and out pacifist. In the cause of peace, he chose his queen, sacrificed bellicose advisers and surrendered vital bargaining chips to the French. Although Henry VI was willing to don armour and ride to battle, he never once raised his sword against an enemy, and his first experience of military violence came in his 34th year, when he watched impotently as his leading supporters were butchered in the streets of St Albans.

Henry V's military activity provided common experience and a focus for loyalty with his peers and subjects. It made them, to quote Shakespeare, a "band of brothers", winning Henry fame and his subjects glory.

There and back again

Henry VI's coronation at Notre-Dame, Paris in 1431, depicted in a contemporary manuscript. While his father crossed the Channel at the head of his armies on a number of occasions, this was the only time Henry visited France

AKG IMAGES

Was Agincourt *really* Henry V's finest hour?
Find out more about Henry V's greatest victory in this article on the HistoryExtra website: *historyextra.com/henrys-triumph*

The tables are turned

ABOVE: The English siege of Rouen (1418–19), shown in a 15th-century illumination. Victory here was a key moment in Henry V's conquest of Normandy.
RIGHT: A miniature shows English troops attempting to storm a French camp outside Castillon in 1453. Their failure to do so cost Henry VI the Hundred Years' War

ALAMY/BRIDGEMAN

Henry VI was trained for warfare by a military veteran and kitted out with weapons and armour as a child. He even rode a courser (warhorse) from the age of three. Yet the only time he visited France was for his coronation as a 10-year-old. Military leadership was always deputised to a noble kinsman.

Why, then, did the son not become a formidable military leader in the mould of the father? After all, the Hundred Years' War was far from over. The answer is a question of nature but also, importantly, of nurture.

Henry V was extraordinarily fortunate in his upbringing, and in many ways his formative years and ultimate monarchical successes mirror those of Henry VI's Yorkist rival and successor, Edward IV.

Both Henry V and Edward hailed from families with many sons. This meant they were expendable, and therefore benefited from being allowed to witness lordship and warfare firsthand. By contrast, Henry VI was an only child in the utterly unprecedented position of governing two realms, as a baby. His life was so precious that it could not be endangered by proximity to war.

Henry VI's insecurity was exacerbated by biological factors beyond his control: despite marrying and producing illegitimate children, none of his Lancastrian uncles had legitimate offspring, which meant that until 1447 his closest heir was the 50-something Duke of Gloucester, and after that, his distant cousin Richard, Duke of York. If Henry died fighting in France, as his father had done, the Lancastrian line would die with him.

Nonetheless, if Henry VI had really wished to lead an army, he could have done so. The teenage king Henry VIII insisted on riding to war early in his reign, despite lacking brothers or an heir. Indeed, more than once in the reign of Henry VI, preparations were made for him to cross the Channel in force before royal command was delegated elsewhere, and when the Lancastrian throne was threatened by internal rivals it would have greatly bolstered Henry's cause if he had personally fought alongside his men.

Henry V knew the power that the presence of the king in the field could hold. At Agincourt, the French noblemen were numerous but their king, Charles VI, was too mentally unwell to attend. By contrast, Henry V was, according to a contemporary English chronicler, "the first to charge the enemy… giving his men in his own person brave examples of daring as he scattered the enemy ranks with his ready axe". Henry V's dominant leadership was a major factor in English victory.

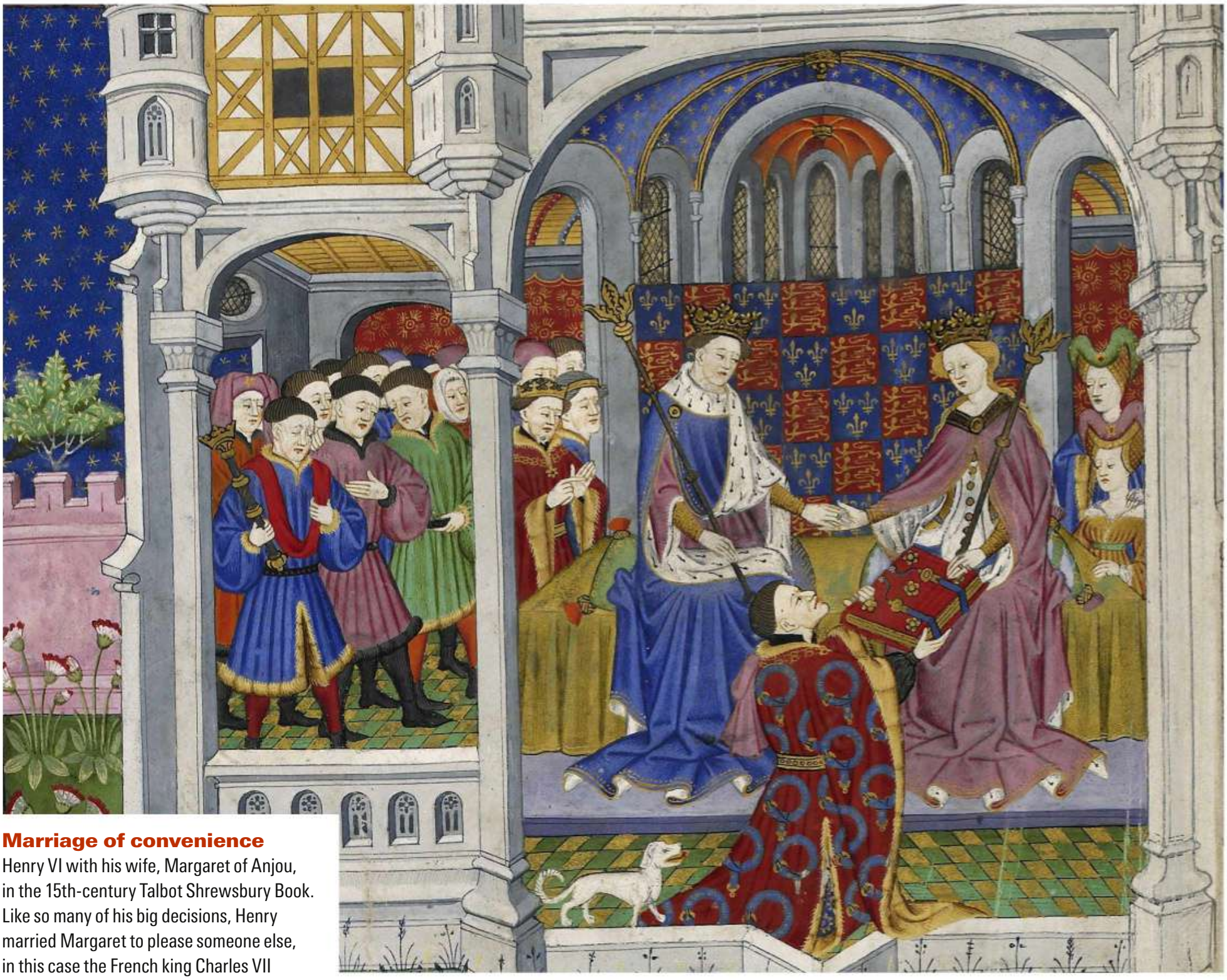
Suffering unleashed

But there was a dark side to warfare that never sat well with the pious Henry VI. He never forgot that his father's "glorious" French wars had unleashed suffering on both sides of the Channel. Indeed, by modern standards some of Henry V's military choices rank as atrocities. After Agincourt, he ordered that prisoners of war be murdered. And it was not merely enemy combatants who suffered. Innocent women and children were starved to death during Henry V's five-month siege of Rouen in 1418 and 1419. Even his direct contemporaries found some of the king's actions excessive. An English eyewitness at Rouen described with pity: "A child of two years or three going about to beg its bread, [as] father and mother both were dead… And women holding in their arms dead children… and the children sucking in their pap within a dead woman's lap."

Two years after the battle of Agincourt, another (anonymous) Englishman commemorated Henry's victory in ambiguous terms: "Our England, therefore, has reason to rejoice and reason to grieve. Reason to rejoice [in] the victory gained and the deliverance of her men, reason to grieve for the suffering and destruction wrought in the deaths of Christians."

This was the true face of medieval war, and it was a reality that Henry VI could not stomach. In this, he was far from alone. By the time his father died, the English were sick of conflict, being already 85 years into the Hundred Years' War. It was increasingly difficult to extract taxes to pay for military campaigns from a parliament that felt the war offered little advantage to Englishmen. The sheer scale of the bloodshed was starting to be questioned. By 1439 it was claimed that more men had died in the century of warfare than were alive now in both kingdoms. As a member of Henry VI's council (or the king himself) observed: "So much Christian blood shed that it is [both] a sorrow and a horror to think or hear it."

In 1440, aged 18, Henry VI marked his accession to adult rule – which had been slowly proceeding since 1437 – with two statements of intent. He founded a college at Eton and shortly thereafter at Cambridge, becoming the first king to create his own educational establishments. And he took the first step towards peace with France, defying his father's last wishes by freeing the French prisoner of war, Charles, Duke of Orléans. Orléans had been pulled from a pile of corpses on the battlefield at Agincourt 25 years earlier – and his release had been expressly forbidden by Henry V. Flouting the



Marriage of convenience
Henry VI with his wife, Margaret of Anjou, in the 15th-century Talbot Shrewsbury Book. Like so many of his big decisions, Henry married Margaret to please someone else, in this case the French king Charles VII

late king's will yet further, Henry VI suggested to one of his negotiators with France that in return for an alliance, he would surrender the French crown.

Henry's peace policy was so audacious that it divided public opinion and alienated his closest advisors. His uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, declared it was "the greatest sign of infamy that ever fell to [the king]… or to [his] noble progenitors", and that he "would rather die" than accept it. Henry VI was at pains to emphasise that his new peace policy was the natural continuation of his ancestors' wars. They, too, had ultimately negotiated peace – Henry V's Treaty at Troyes was a case in point. But his subjects were not appeased. And worse was to follow.

Ceding territory

Henry VI was right that a grand gesture was required to end the Hundred Years' War – but his judgment was poor on exactly what that gesture should be. Having freed Orléans, he then married the impoverished French noblewoman Margaret of Anjou to please her uncle, Charles VII of France, and ceded the hard-won territory of Maine in the process. He lost control of his disgruntled garrisons in France, giving the wily Charles VII justification for military vengeance. The result, ultimately, was the loss of all Henry's French territories, including some that had been held by the kings of England for centuries.

This was one of several instances in which Henry's good intentions, but poor judgment, proved his undoing. He was honest to a fault, politically naïve, generous in the extreme. In a king, such virtues became vices. He failed to match his rivals for guile and was horrified by what he considered their treachery in abandoning alliances with England.

Currying favour
Henry VI's decision to free Charles, Duke of Orléans (left) symbolised his willingness to appease the French

In his own realm, Henry rewarded servants and overlooked wrongdoing in his supporters. When asked for favour, he invariably showed it, without considering the consequences. In the most notorious instance of his absent-minded liberality, he gave the same West Country title to two men at once, inciting a decades-long civil war. His constant desire was to avoid conflict. Where he had a choice between something right but difficult, or wrong but easy, he always chose the latter.

The cause of this character fault is to be found in his childhood. It had taken an extraordinary collective effort by the ruling elite of England to ensure Henry V's son inherited England peacefully. There had been boy kings before – the last, Richard II, was crowned at the age of 10 half a century earlier. But there had never been a baby king of England. While who should rule was never in

BRIDGEMAN/ALAMY

question, how they should rule was, and the resulting factionalism dividing Henry's council was to blight his childhood.

Henry VI had a superfluity of uncles and mentors, each with their own ideal of government. His great uncle, Archbishop (later Cardinal) Henry Beaufort, led a band of noblemen and bishops who favoured a royal council; his eldest uncle John, Duke of Bedford, sought to rule France and act as protector over a council in England; and his youngest surviving uncle, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, craved the regency of England solely for himself.

These were powerful men, the wealthiest and most influential of the realm, and reconciling their conflicting demands would have been challenging for an adult king. It proved insurmountable for Henry. Time and again during his childhood he was called upon to witness public peace-making between his uncles, only for cohesion to collapse in private.

Bedford was often abroad fighting Henry's wars, leaving Cardinal Beaufort and the Duke of Gloucester to scrap things out between them: in parliament, palaces and even the streets of London, where tensions once escalated to such an extent that armed men faced off across London Bridge.

Gloucester was the first to realise that Henry's essentially pliable nature made him susceptible to coercion, and tried to motivate his nephew into assuming power early so he could rule through him. This led to a bewildering face-off between king and council, where the adolescent monarch was told, with all possible respect, that he simply wasn't up to the job of ruling yet.

The encounter compounded the sensitive Henry's mistrust of his own judgment, encouraging his instinct to delegate authority to one leading courtier after another: first Gloucester, then the generally despised Duke of Suffolk, the unfortunate Duke of Somerset under whom France was lost, and eventually his queen, Margaret of Anjou.

The fatal flaw

But Henry V must share some of the blame for the problems of his son's reign. In 1422, as he lay dying in France, physically wasted by camp sickness but still mentally acute, Henry V added codicils to his will that dictated how his successor should fight the French war. Those deathbed directions held his successor hostage for 20 years, leaving no room for his son and his advisors to manoeuvre, even as circumstances changed beyond the late king's foresight. Had Henry V lived, he almost certainly would have adapted his policy, as Henry VI was forced to do. But leaving no latitude in his directions, Henry V effectively stymied Lancastrian government.

Henry V's premature demise left his son without paternal protection or kingly example. This proved Henry VI's fatal flaw

Henry V's decision to lead his armies in person at the sickness-ravaged siege of Meaux was also disastrous to his regime. It directly caused his death, and left his infant son without kingly example or paternal protection. This proved to be Henry VI's fatal flaw. Because he never met his father – who departed to France during Queen Catherine's pregnancy – Henry VI never witnessed kingship in action. He never even saw true leadership firsthand, since those ruling on his behalf took pains to defer to him in public. His exempla were biblical figures and historical kings – but he never learned how to temper the ideals of kingship with the realpolitik of medieval rule.

If Henry V had lived to have more sons, and to offer an example to his heir, things could have been very different. He would have been beset by the same troubles as his son. Charles VII would have raised an army against him. Continental intrigues and English infighting would have bedevilled attempts at peace. The English treasury would have been drained to breaking point. Henry V was lucky, then, to die at the height of his powers, ensuring his lasting fame.

Had Henry VI died in spring 1453, when his wife was pregnant, French lands being reclaimed, talk of a fresh invasion led by the king himself on the wind, and parliament pliable, we would remember him considerably more kindly. Instead, he died a prisoner of Edward IV, aged 49, shabby and bearded, teeth ground down by years of anxiety, having lost almost everyone he cared about – most of them violently. As Shakespeare recognised, Henry V's life story is a glorious history because of how it ended, just as Henry VI's life was a tragedy. H

Bitter inheritance
Henry V's effigy atop his magnificent tomb in Westminster Abbey. The king's deathbed directions "held his successor hostage for 20 years", writes Lauren Johnson

ALAMY

Lauren Johnson is a historian and writer. Her books include *Shadow King: The Life and Death of Henry VI* (Head of Zeus, 2019)

The explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes explains why he admires Henry V on BBC Radio 4's **Great Lives** at *bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00p62v6*

Lieutenant Colonel Friedrich Roske during the Second World War. “The men carry on in their duty day and night without protection in this hell,” he wrote of the struggle for Stalingrad

In September 1942, German lieutenant colonel **Friedrich Roske** declared himself "the master of the centre of Stalingrad" after his troops had smashed their way into the heart of the city.

But with thousands of Soviet guardsmen poised to launch a furious counter-attack, his triumph was to be short-lived.

Roske's previously unpublished testimonies reveal, in unsparing detail, the grim fate of the German troops holed up in Stalingrad as the Red Army began to tighten its grip...

By Iain MacGregor

AIR POWER
A German Heinkel He 111 in the Stalingrad area, 1942. For much of the battle for Stalingrad, the Luftwaffe dominated the skies over the city

CLOSE COMBAT
Vasily Chuikov (second left) issues orders in his bunker, November 1942. The general galvanised the Soviet defence of the city, ordering his troops to "hug the enemy"

AKG

Winters in Russia can be brutal. By November 1942, temperatures along the Volga river had plummeted towards –20°C. And the remaining troops of the German Sixth Army, pinned down by Soviet forces in and around Stalingrad (now Volgograd) amid the fractured ruins, factories and other buildings they'd captured earlier that autumn, were experiencing the worst of the conditions.

"The men carry on in their duty day and night without protection in this hell," reported Lieutenant Colonel Friedrich "Fritz" Roske, writing home to his wife in Düsseldorf. "Food is poor, [and there's] no time or possibility of rest. Last night I brought chocolates and cigarettes for everyone with me… which I had saved for when the situation might become more desperate… All night, the Russians attempted to work around our positions and capture [it]."

Roske penned this letter days after 19 November 1942, when Soviet armies commanded by General Georgy Zhukov had launched a massive counter-attack on the weakened Axis flanks, and had soon encircled the Sixth Army in a move that would help change the course of the war on the eastern front. As Roske recognised: "He [Zhukov] definitely had to take it – and we had to hold on to what we had."

Roske's letter is one of a number of previously unpublished testimonies of the struggle between two opposing units: the Sixth Army's 71st Infantry Division, in which he served, and the Soviet 13th Guards Rifle Division, led by Major General Alexander Rodimtsev. As a front-line commander, Roske witnessed the savage fighting in Stalingrad, German and Soviet soldiers alike offering no quarter as they struggled to capture buildings floor by floor and sometimes even room by room.

Roske's diaries and letters home, as well as his 1955 memoir (all of which I was fortunate to be given access to by his family) offer a unique commentary on the deteriorating conditions, the morale of his men and the fighting they encountered. They also provide startling new insights into the surrender of the German Sixth Army under Field Marshal Friedrich Paulus. For these reasons, his is one of the key voices in my new book, *The Lighthouse of Stalingrad*, analysing the fight for the heart of the city between September 1942 and January 1943.

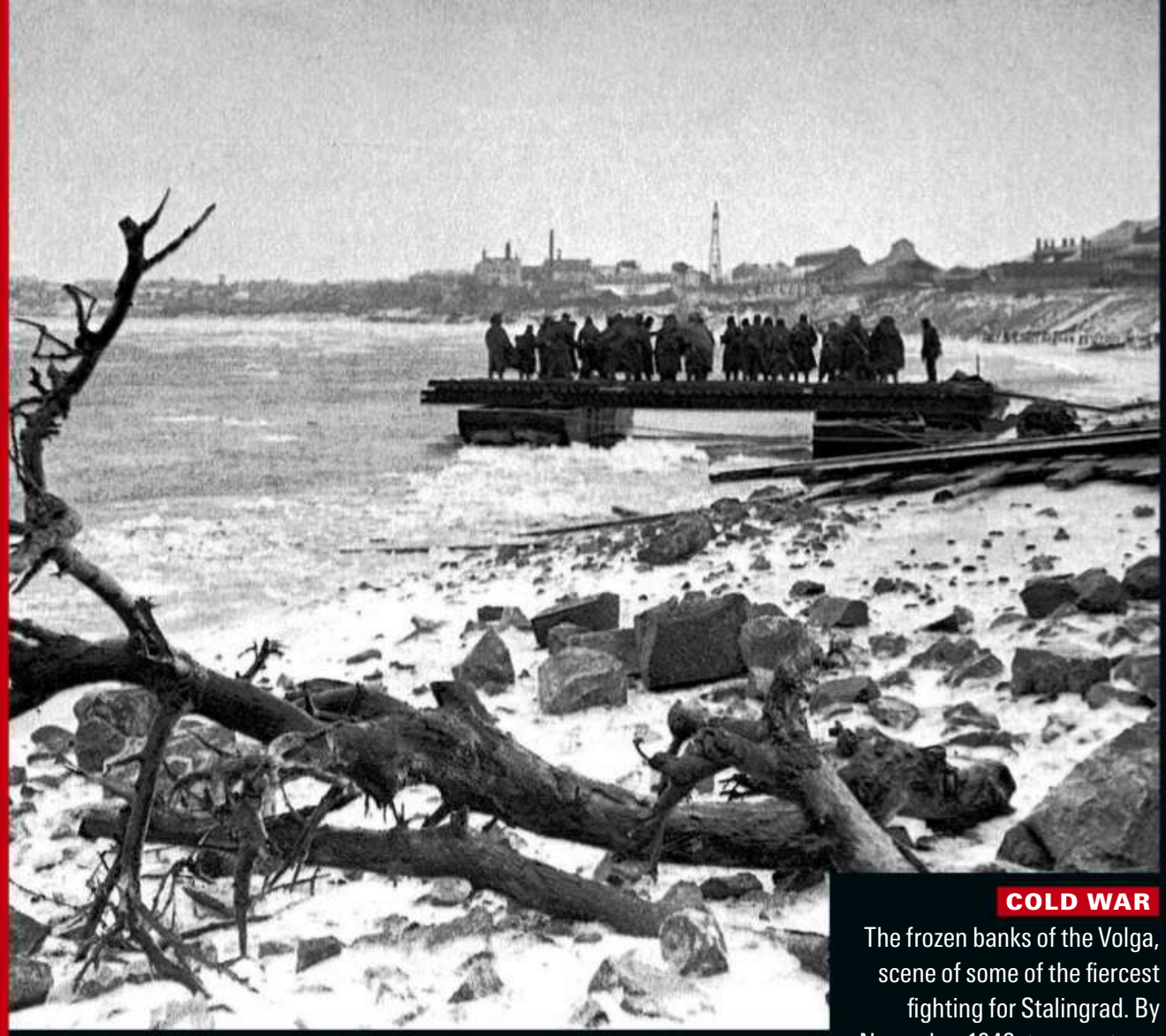
The precipice of disaster

Born in 1897, Fritz Roske fought in the First World War and then worked in New York for an architecture practice in the 1920s. He re-enlisted in 1934 as Germany re-armed under Adolf Hitler; by the outbreak of the Second World War, he had been promoted to the rank of major, and fought in the campaign for France in 1940.

The following June, Roske led an infantry regiment during the initial Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. But he was transferred to the officer reserve pool in France where, bored with his duties teaching tactics, he volunteered to command in a new offensive in southern Russia. That push, codenamed Case Blue, began on 28 June 1942.

By late summer, Stalin's Soviet Union teetered on the precipice of disaster. The 1.5 million men and armoured columns of Hitler's Army Group South stormed across the Russian steppe, aiming to capture vital oil depots in the Caucasus, while following a strategy to push

Roske's letters and diary entries offer a unique, frontline commentary on the savagery of the battle



COLD WAR
The frozen banks of the Volga, scene of some of the fiercest fighting for Stalingrad. By November 1942, temperatures were plunging towards –20°C

eastwards towards the Volga to protect the German flank.

Having been convinced that the Germans would repeat their advance on Moscow, Stalin now had to scramble to send reinforcements south to shore up his front there. But by now, Axis forces were deep in the Caucasus, and some German motorised units were already parked on the banks of the Volga north of Stalingrad. So in September 1942, the scene was set for a titanic clash, resulting in more than 2 million casualties and marking the turning point in the Third Reich's fortunes.

The Soviets' battered command

As German forces progressed towards Stalingrad, casualty numbers among frontline officers surged, and in early September 1942 Fritz Roske was dropped in to command Infantry Regiment 194 of the 71st Infantry Division. "We stand in this phase of the struggle, which is of exceptional importance for the war and especially for the eastern campaign," he wrote to his officers that month. "The whole world looks at the troops from Stalingrad… The troops are to be informed of this."

At that point, the infantry divisions of the Sixth Army were still in good order – on paper, at least. Paulus, supported by Fourth Panzer Army to his south, had 24 divisions. However, concerned about increasing Soviet counter-attacks to the north of Stalingrad, he used less than half of these divisions to assault the city along its 40-kilometre front, pitting 170,000 men and hundreds of tanks, assault guns and artillery pieces against the shattered, demoralised remnants of the Soviet 62nd and 64th Armies. The decisive factor that initially tipped the balance in favour of the Germans was air power: for much of the battle, the Luftwaffe ruled the skies over Stalingrad.

Commanded by Lieutenant General Vasily I Chuikov, the 62nd Army defended the heart of Stalingrad and

GETTY IMAGES

TIMELINE
Stalingrad: seven months that turned the tide of the war

28 June 1942
Germany launches the offensive codenamed Case Blue in southern Russia.

23 July
Hitler orders simultaneous offensives aimed at Stalingrad and the Caucasus.

28 July
Stalin demands that Soviet troops retreating across the steppe should take "Not One Step Back!"

23–24 August
The Luftwaffe begins carpet-bombing Stalingrad, and German forces enter the city's northern suburbs.

13 September
The battle for Stalingrad city centre begins.

8 November
Hitler announces in Munich that Stalingrad is in his hands.

19–24 November
The Soviets launch a counter-offensive that encircles the Sixth Army and its Axis allies. Hitler orders German forces to stand and fight.

25 November
The Luftwaffe launches an airlift to supply besieged German forces in Stalingrad.

12–23 December
The Germans launch Operation Winter Storm, dispatching the Fourth Panzer Army to rescue the Sixth Army. The operation is called off after nine days of intense fighting.

8–25 January 1943
The Soviets issue three ultimatums demanding the surrender of the Sixth Army. All are refused.

30 January
Hitler promotes General Friedrich Paulus, commander of German forces in Stalingrad, to field marshal in an attempt to ensure he resists surrender.

31 January
Field Marshal Paulus surrenders to the Soviets; nearly 91,000 soldiers of the German Sixth Army are taken prisoner. The battle of Stalingrad is over.

Friedrich Paulus, commander of German forces in Stalingrad, pictured on his surrender

the Factory District in the north. Like Roske, Chuikov had recently arrived to lead a battered, albeit larger command and, also like the German officer, his performance during the five months of fighting would be superb amid horrific conditions.

Before Chuikov could scramble together his defence to block the Sixth Army's progression, Roske had set about reorganising what remained of his infantry regiment. By then, Infantry Regiment 194 had been ravaged by several weeks of fighting; in some cases, companies were reduced to a few dozen combatants led by junior officers or non-commissioned officers – shortages replicated across the divisions tasked with capturing Stalingrad. Roske reconfigured the regiment as best he could in order to assault the city quickly. Taking his three existing weakened battalions, he created two stronger ones augmented with extra reinforcements from support and supply units.

By 13 September, as other German regiments toiled their way through the dense suburbs, Roske ordered his two battalions to advance as shock columns, supported by mobile artillery and Luftwaffe ground support, and smash their way into the heart of the city. He intended to seize the embankment of the Volga and split the Soviet defence in two, destroying their supplies coming across the Volga from the east and driving them into the river.

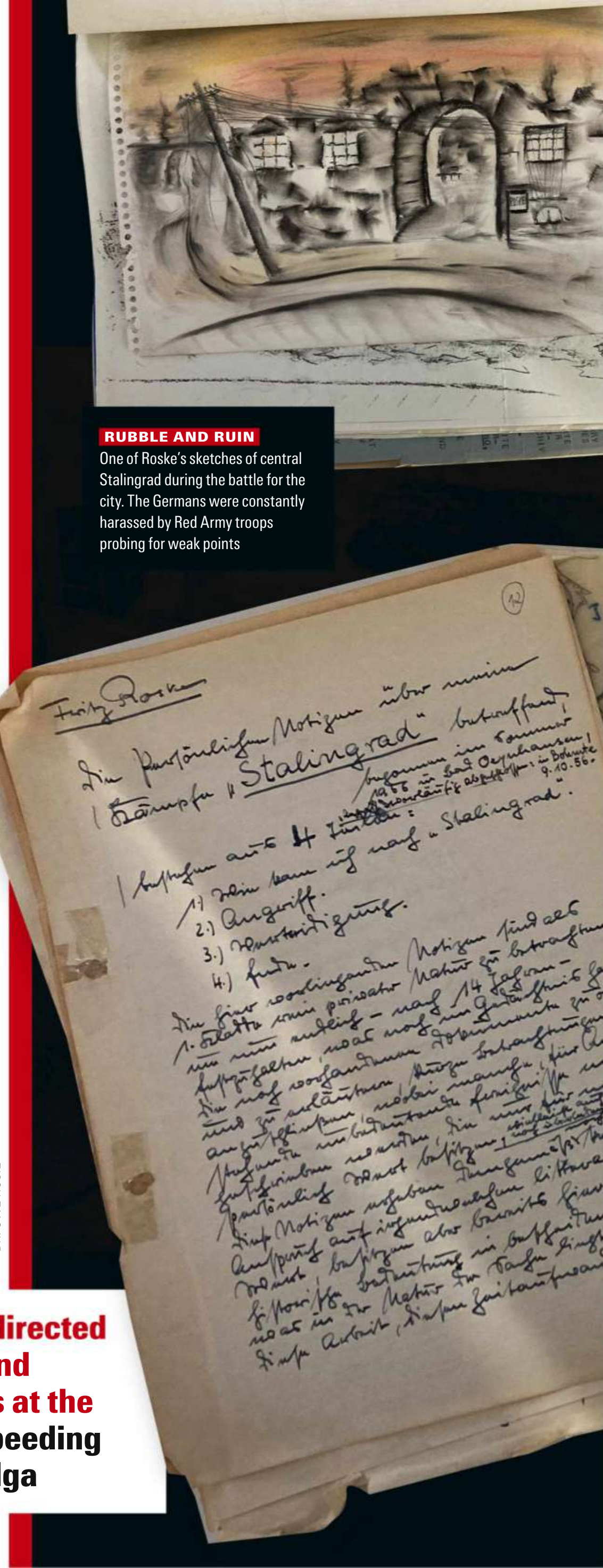
Despite heavy losses, including a disastrous "friendly fire" aerial attack from Stukas that wiped out one of his companies, Roske achieved the seemingly impossible. In just a few hours, his two battalions surged towards the river and captured buildings overlooking the Central Landing Pier. Having reached this key objective, Roske recorded his admiration of his regiment's performance.

"Being able to achieve this success despite being bombed by our own side and facing a determined enemy was a superb performance by both battalions," he wrote. "Only the survivors who experienced such a firestorm can appreciate what the men did. We managed to avert a mass panic, and the men retained their good spirits… I was the master of the centre of Stalingrad!"

Reversal of fortune

Within 24 hours, though, Roske's unit was fighting for its life after Chuikov ordered Major General Alexander Rodimtsev's 10,000-strong division across the Volga to retake the city centre that evening. Roske's men attempted to stop the Soviet assault, directing a hail of fire and mortar rounds at the guardsmen speeding across the Volga in armoured boats and fighting their way up the embankment.

By 26 September, Chuikov changed his tactics to negate the German's superior artillery and air support. From now on his men would "hug the enemy", establishing their front line within a few metres of German forces. He ordered his commanders "not to carry out operations in battle by whole units like companies and battalions". Instead, "The offensive should be organised chiefly on the basis of small groups, with tommy guns, hand grenades, bottles of incendiary mixture and anti-tank rifles." Thus the Red Army created the "Storm Group", an urban warfare



RUBBLE AND RUIN
One of Roske's sketches of central Stalingrad during the battle for the city. The Germans were constantly harassed by Red Army troops probing for weak points

DR. UWE ROSIE

Roske's men directed a hail of fire and mortar rounds at the guardsmen speeding across the Volga

SHOCK TROOPS
Roske's Infantry Regiment 194 advances towards the Volga atop armoured assault guns. They spearheaded the German assault on the centre of the city

COMRADES IN ARMS
Roske with one of his officers in Stalingrad. In his final letter to his wife from the city, he observed that "the spirit within our regiment is quite marvellous"

FRONTLINE DISPATCHES
Pages from Roske's diaries and letters, plus (second left) his operational map of Stalingrad. At the time of his death in 1956, Roske was using his testimonies to write a mini-memoir

A BLOODY VICTORY
A mass grave of Soviet troops on the Stalingrad front, January 1943. Despite sustaining huge losses, by the end of the month the Red Army had crushed German forces in the city

tactic that would become legendary. Instead of frontal attacks by massed troops, the Soviets employed teams of between four and eight men, armed with grenades, a PPSh-41 submachine gun, explosives and, where necessary, a flamethrower. Each unit was able to take a building and hold onto it, enabling an "active defence" – Chuikov's strategy to bleed the Sixth Army of reinforcements.

The fighting was intense, as one German officer from Roske's division testified: "The Russians doggedly held on to the ruins of the city with a stubbornness that was beyond their already impressive fighting spirit and morale. They did this so effectively that we could barely make any further headway."

Over the remaining four months, Germans and Soviets battled for the city's heartland in house-to-house fighting. As losses mounted, both sides increasingly sent in reinforcements unused to urban combat. Roske's men were in the thick of the action, as he described in a letter home to his wife, Barbara: "We used hand grenades continuously… We threw 5kg loads of explosive through the windows. When this still didn't work as we'd hoped… [we blasted] holes through the adjoining walls and attacked that way.

"It was almost impossible to protect the artilleryman, whom we had quickly tried to train in our assault tactics," he added. "They couldn't keep up and didn't fully understand the situation; it was difficult to instil strength and maintain their morale with all the blood and death around us."

Through October the Russians clung to their bridgehead, and the fighting continued till Georgy Zhukov's 19 November counter-attack encircled the Sixth Army.

"It was difficult to instil strength and maintain their morale with all the blood and death around us"

THE **BATTLE OF STALINGRAD** IN NUMBERS

15
Length of the city of Stalingrad in miles, stretched along the banks of the river Volga

25 million
Rounds of small arms ammunition fired by the Sixth Army in just one month, when it also expended 500,000 anti-tank rounds, 752,000 artillery shells and 178,000 hand grenades

More than 41,000
Houses and buildings reduced to rubble in Stalingrad during the battle

More than 1.1 million
Red Army casualties of the battle, which also saw the loss of 4,300 Soviet tanks, 15,728 artillery pieces and 2,769 aircraft

187
The number of combat-worthy men left standing in the 71st Infantry Division by the surrender on 31 January 1943. More than 15,000 had marched into the Soviet Union at the start of Operation Barbarossa in June 1941

5,000
Men of the Sixth Army who returned to Germany from Soviet captivity by 1955 – of 91,000 captured in 1943, from an original complement of more than 330,000

AKG-IMAGES

The horrors of Stalingrad
Iain MacGregor will be discussing **Friedrich Roske's testimonies** on the HistoryExtra podcast: *historyextra.com/podcast*

INCHING FORWARDS
Troops engaged in streetfighting, 1942. The battle of Stalingrad witnessed the rise of the Soviet "Storm Group", heavily armed units of four to eight men, tailored for urban warfare

AKG

During January Soviet armour and intense massed infantry assaults drove the Axis forces back into the city, the air relief promised by Hitler delivering a fraction of the supplies his men needed.

Tens of thousands of freezing and emaciated German stragglers flooded into what Hitler called "Fortress Stalingrad", hoping for protection from both the Soviets and the weather. In cellars, sewers and bunkers dug into the frozen ground, they huddled together and awaited the end game. Many flocked to the central district where the 71st Infantry Division, the one fortified unit still holding out in strength, was positioned.

Agonising endgame

Even in such hopeless times, Roske remained intent on doing his duty. "For us, the priority now was to bind the enemy down for as long and as much as possible – until we died of hunger or cold, or were shot dead," he wrote.

Thousands were killed as the Red Army pulverised the remaining German pockets of resistance. The central pocket, which housed Paulus's headquarters, was protected by the 71st Division – now commanded by Roske after his superior officer, General Alexander von Hartmann, was picked off by a sniper on 26 January. Roske now shared his divisional headquarters with Paulus and his staff in the cellars of the Univermag Department Store, which was continually raked by enemy machine-gun fire and pounded by Russian mortar and artillery rounds.

The German perimeter was constantly being probed for weak points. Roske noted: "If [the Soviets] found a gap in the defence… they immediately rushed there and had to be beaten back out with a counter-attack. Usually no one slept at night; during the day they slept in turns – one hour to sleep, one hour to watch."

Forced into close proximity, Paulus and Roske – now promoted to major general – established a close bond. Just before the final surrender, the former brought Roske news of the birth of his fifth child – a son. The stress and fatigue of the months of fighting, the loss of comrades, the pressure of commanding the final redoubt, now the joyous news of the birth of his son – it was too much, and Roske was briefly overwhelmed by emotion: "I turned away from him and went into the pitch-black corridor, so that my tears would not be seen."

The end of the battle came on 31 January. Roske's unpublished memoir reveals that it was he who initiated and then led the meeting with the Soviets that confirmed the German surrender. The last lines from his final letter to his wife summed up his quality as a combat leader: "The spirit within our regiment is quite marvellous. We are so very proud to be able to be in such a community of true men in Stalingrad."

Marched off into captivity, Roske was tried as a war criminal, serving 12 years of confinement in camps across Siberia, the Urals and the Caucasus. He was among the last batch of German PoWs to return home, arriving back in Düsseldorf in 1955. For several months he busied himself as a civilian in his hometown, finding out which of his comrades had survived and getting to know his family again. In the months after his return to Germany, Roske wrote the initial draft of a mini-memoir. Then, on Christmas Day 1956, he took his own life, leaving behind a wife and five children.

We don't know what Roske went through during his captivity, and why he chose to kill himself. But the letters, diaries and memoirs he penned describing his experiences in Stalingrad shed new light on the suffering that he and many thousands endured in one of the most brutal battles in history. H

Iain MacGregor is a historian and author. His new book, *The Lighthouse of Stalingrad: The Hidden Truth at the Centre of WWII's Greatest Battle* (Constable), is out now

Q&A

A selection of historical **conundrums** answered by experts

What was a scold's bridle?

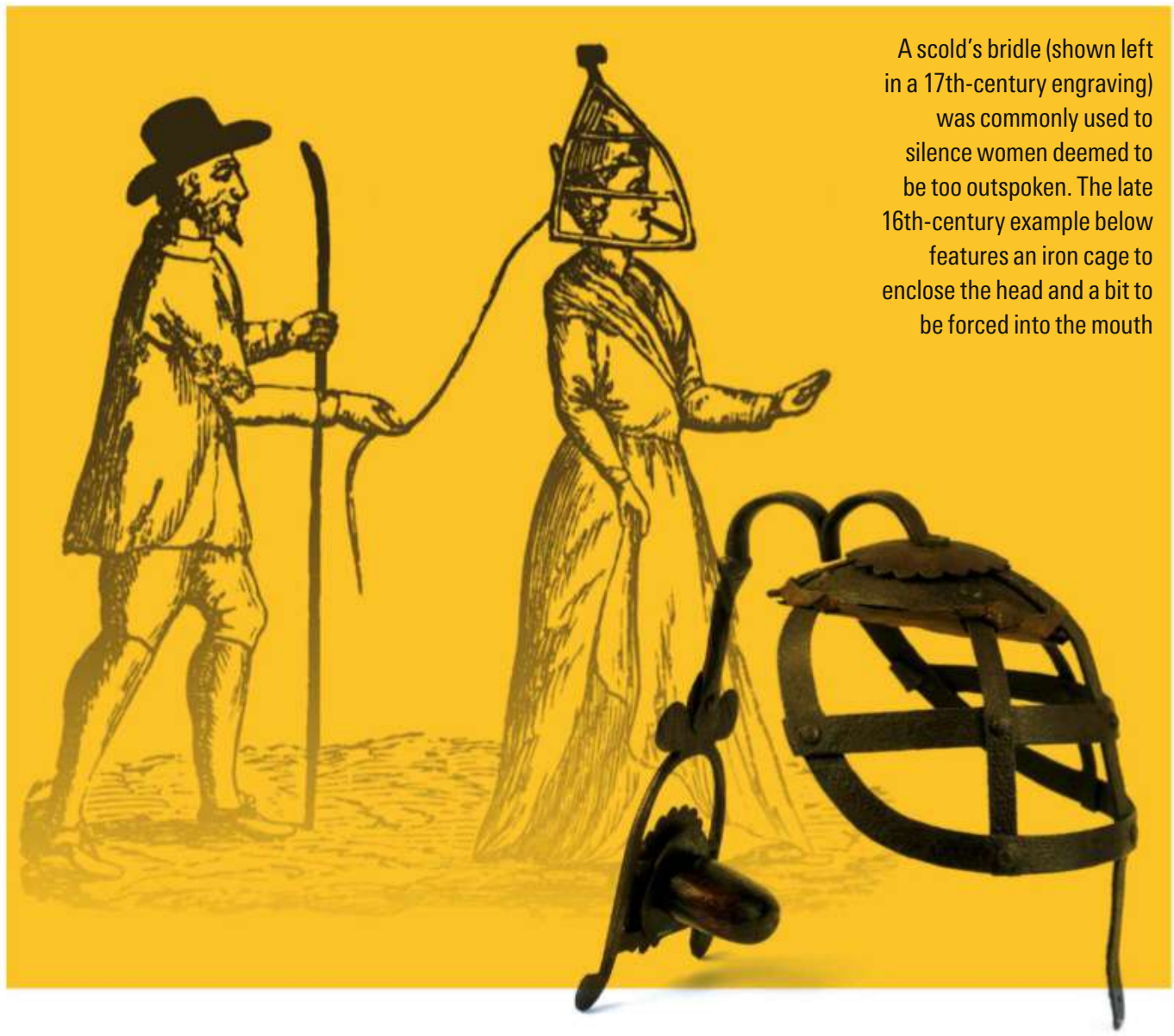
Though exact specifications varied, a scold's bridle generally consisted of an iron helmet or cage that encased the head, incorporating a spiked plate or bit that was placed into the mouth to constrain the tongue and render speech impossible. The "bridled" person would then be symbolically paraded through or exhibited in their local community. The earliest evidence of such a device dates from the end of the 16th century.

Used officially and unofficially in England to discipline individuals, almost invariably women, the name reflects its use in controlling women whose speech was thought to be aggressive or disruptive, particularly towards husbands, addressing fears that such outspokenness could upset gender power structures within communities. However, evidence suggests that it was also employed to punish blasphemers and religious dissidents of both sexes. Its use simultaneously silenced individuals, signalled the misdemeanour and invoked personal shame.

A still-more brutal variation of this punishment, called a "branks", was employed mostly north of the border in Scotland. The branks featured extra prongs that extended farther into the unfortunate person's mouth. In addition, at the back of the cage or helmet was fixed a chain by which the punished individual was led around with aggressive tugs – frequently causing disfigurement of the mouth and loss of teeth.

The use of such punishments lingered for centuries. Indeed, the practice continued into the 19th century, when scold's bridles were used in workhouses to discipline unruly women and those suffering from alcoholism.

David Nash, professor of history at Oxford Brookes University



A scold's bridle (shown left in a 17th-century engraving) was commonly used to silence women deemed to be too outspoken. The late 16th-century example below features an iron cage to enclose the head and a bit to be forced into the mouth

The Leaning Tower of Pisa, famed for its tilt, attracts millions of visitors each year

Was the Leaning Tower of Pisa ever straight?

Not really. Work started on the grand cathedral bell tower – intended to symbolise the wealth and prestige of the city-state of Pisa – in 1173. Within five years, with just three storeys complete, the lean was noticeable.

Construction was then interrupted by wars, financial problems and attempts to correct the lean, including efforts to compensate by making new storeys slightly shorter on one side. The delays – especially the first, lasting almost 100 years – probably saved the tower from collapse, allowing its foundations to settle in the soft ground. It was finally completed in the 1370s, and bells were installed over the following four centuries. By the early 20th century, though, the heavier bells were no longer used because of fears about the tower's stability.

By the 1990s, the structure was subsiding at more than 1mm per year, and a massive remedial project was undertaken, straightening it slightly. It's still leaning, but is now expected to remain stable for many years to come.

Eugene Byrne, author and journalist

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Is it true that people from former Confederate states fled to Brazil and founded a pro-slavery town, Americana?

Yes. In fact, Americana was just one of many overseas colonies established by people from former Confederate states who left the US after the American Civil War. The conflict had ravaged the Southern economy: neglected plantations had reverted to bush, factories had been razed to the ground, and railroads lay in disrepair. Moreover, many Confederates feared punishment at the hands of vengeful Northern politicians in Washington DC. So, foreseeing only poverty and persecution to come, some 10,000–20,000 Southerners packed up their belongings and departed for new lands.

Most of these migrants headed for Brazil, which they believed to be a tropical paradise, brimming with natural resources – and among the few remaining pro-slavery countries in the Americas. Confederate defeat in the Civil War had brought an end to slavery in the US, and many white Southerners shuddered at the thought of living alongside free black people. In Brazil, they believed, they could rebuild the Old South's slaveholding society in new and pleasantly tropical environs.

Life in Brazil was hard, though. Lacking access to good land and capital, about half of those North American wanderers returned to the US within a decade. Among those who stayed were the residents of Americana, a settlement about 70 miles north-west of São Paulo, where fertile soil and a nearby railroad nurtured a thriving economy based on cotton production. The town's Southern founders obtained some enslaved people to work on their plantations, but a shortage of funds forced them to supplement these workers with free labourers.

In 1888, when the Brazilian government abolished slavery, Americana became an entirely free-labour economy, but it never lost its association with the Old South. Even today the town holds an annual festival to celebrate its Southern traditions and culture – an outpost of old Dixie in distant Brazil.

Alys Beverton, lecturer in American history at Oxford Brookes University

ALAMY

Obaysch basks in the sun at London Zoo in 1852

DID YOU KNOW...?

Sham syndrome

During the Second World War, Italian doctors invented an entirely fictitious disease in an effort to save Jews and anti-fascists from deportation to Nazi concentration and death camps. In October 1943, physicians at Fatebenefratelli Hospital announced that they were treating a number of patients – actually anti-fascists and Jews from the Rome ghetto – with the highly contagious and fatal *Morbo di K* (K Syndrome). Fearful of contracting the disease, German soldiers didn't search the "infected" ward – saving some 100 people from deportation.

Loathed letter

The German poet Gottlob Burmann had such a dislike of the letter R that he published poetry in which it was never used. His 64-page book *Gedichte ohne den Buchstaben R (Poems without the Letter R)* first appeared in Berlin in 1788. The eccentric Burmann reportedly hated the letter so much that he also tried to eliminate it from his everyday speech – and for the last 17 years of his life he apparently refused to pronounce his own surname.

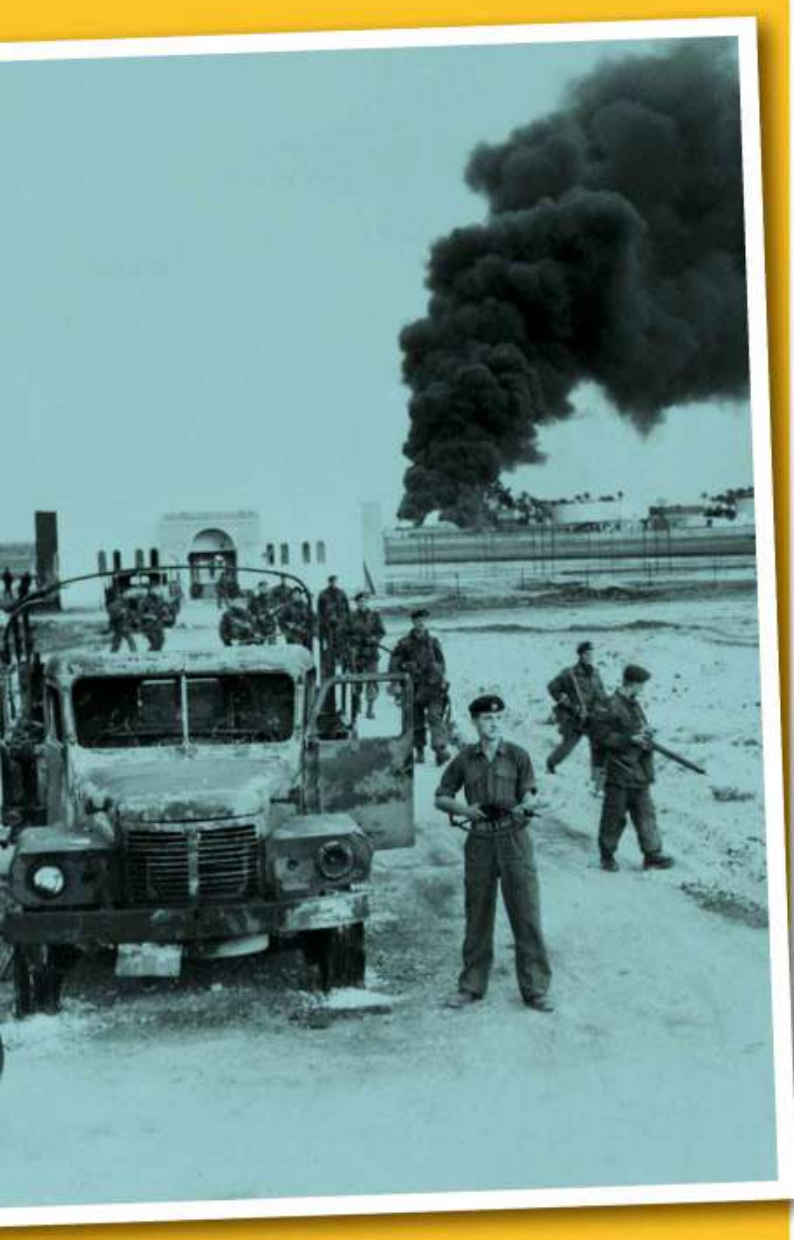
Hippo mania

The first live hippopotamus in Britain since prehistoric times arrived at London Zoo in 1850. Named Obaysch, it was delivered by Sir Charles Murray, British consul-general in Egypt, in an exchange of animals with that country's Ottoman governor, Abbas Pasha. Obaysch rapidly became the zoo's most popular inhabitant, and Victorian London went hippo mad. Silver models of the animal were sold in large quantities, and a "Hippopotamus Polka" was a musical hit. Obaysch died at the zoo in 1878. H

Nick Rennison, writer and journalist specialising in history

BBC at 100
PART 9

Political drama



Conflict and division
British troops in Port Said, northern Egypt, November 1956. The invasion of the region by UK, French and Israeli forces split public opinion, requiring the BBC to air views on both sides of the debate

> "Executives were warned privately that Anthony Eden had ordered a legal instrument to be drawn up allowing his government to take over the BBC"

The 1956 Suez Crisis caused long-simmering tensions between the BBC and the government to boil over – and, as **DAVID HENDY** explores, marked the start of a shift in the relationship between politicians and the public

On November 1956, a 14-minute televised address to the nation by the British prime minister Anthony Eden triggered possibly the single biggest Cold War-era clash between government and the BBC. It stripped bare the intimate, if awkward, relationship between professional broadcasters and the worlds of Westminster and Whitehall. But behind the row lurked another battle between sharply different views on the proper role of television in reporting politics.

The broadcast, on the evening of Saturday 3 November, represented Eden's hurried attempt to justify a botched and ill-judged military adventure of his own making. In the wake of Egypt's recent nationalisation of the Suez Canal, Israeli forces had invaded the Sinai Peninsula at the end of October. Israel's action had been secretly planned in collaboration with Britain and France, in order to justify a subsequent occupation of the Canal Zone by British and French paratroopers.

Eden's collusion had initially been a secret known only to a handful of close ministers and advisors. Yet there was disquiet about Britain's whole response to Egypt's nationalisation. Even before the first British paratroopers had landed, Eden felt compelled to go before the BBC's cameras to explain what was happening. In his broadcast, he spoke of Britain's military intervention as a form of "police action" and claimed that he had acted "rightly and wisely". His words weren't enough to assuage the UN, which condemned the use of force, nor the US, which pressed for an almost immediate ceasefire. Before long, British and French troops had been forced into a humiliating withdrawal.

The problem for the BBC was that the crisis had already divided public and political opinion. The Labour party, in particular, was vehemently opposed to Eden's policy. Oliver Whitley, the assistant controller of the BBC's Overseas Services, later explained the dilemma facing senior staff at the time. "We had all got used to the fact that there wasn't a great deal of difference in foreign policy between the two main political parties," he said, "and here suddenly the nation was split right down the middle, pro and against Suez, and the BBC felt it its duty to reflect accurately, as accurately as it could, the situation." It meant news coverage both at home and abroad had to feature at least some commentary opposed to Eden. It also meant that, with Eden having defended himself on primetime TV, the Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell demanded – and expected – the same treatment. The BBC thought this reasonable; the government did not.

Throughout this unfolding drama, the director general, Ian Jacob, had been in Australia. In his absence, Norman Bottomley, the BBC's director of administration, and Harman Grisewood, the director general's chief assistant, were the two senior corporation officials summoned to Whitehall for a dressing down. Grisewood recalled "a lot of soldiers and some Air Force people" telling them that full wartime conditions applied – conditions that obliged the BBC to support the government of the day just as it had done during the Second World War.

Grisewood and Bottomley refused to accept these terms, and were warned privately that Eden had ordered a legal instrument to be drawn up allowing his government to take over the BBC. It was in the fractious aftermath of this ominous development that the BBC's board of governors agreed to grant Gaitskell his request. On 4 November, just a day after Eden's address, the Labour leader used his own broadcast to launch a blistering attack on the PM, describing the attack on Egypt as "a criminal folly" and calling on Eden to resign – which, not long after, he did.

Under the media spotlight

The government was reluctant to let the corporation go entirely unpunished over its impartial approach. In an attempt to exert greater control, the Foreign Office insisted

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Talking to the nation
Anthony Eden addresses BBC cameras in 1956. His November broadcast on the Suez Crisis failed to assuage his critics

on the appointment of a "liaison officer" in the Overseas Service, hoping the government line would thereby be given more prominence. It had the opposite effect. Oliver Whitley watched a succession of "usually rather young Foreign Office men" turn up at Bush House only to become "firm friends and often very useful advocates of the whole BBC External Broadcasting operation".

On the domestic front, the BBC's willingness to grant Gaitskell his turn before the cameras has often been seen as emblematic of a corporation proudly asserting its independence from government. The reality was more complex. In his memoirs, Grisewood suggested that the row arose not because the BBC had taken sides but because "Eden's aim was secrecy and the BBC's was enlightenment". Yet in the 1950s, when TV was still finding its feet, broadcasters and politicians alike saw that the medium might not always be the ideal forum for hosting important debates. For a start, there seemed an element of artifice that was absent in radio. Among the BBC team responsible for organising Eden's Suez broadcast was the young, freshly recruited producer David Attenborough, who recalled a bizarre scene unfolding inside Downing Street: the prime minister in bed, "looking dreadful, in his pyjamas", pill bottles lined up next to him and his wife frantically dabbing mascara on to his moustache.

In the aftermath of his 1945 election defeat, Churchill had set out in no uncertain terms why he believed "the BBC must do no political broadcasting of any kind" when it came to television: "I've spent 50 years on my feet having to watch the effect of what I was saying as I was saying it," he told the director general. "If I'd also had to worry about how I was looking, politics would have become intolerable."

Some in the BBC might have agreed, at least in private. Grace Wyndham Goldie, who ran the BBC's television current affairs, claimed afterwards that Eden's appearances on screen "never did him justice". Nervousness, she said, drove him to adopt "a kind of self-conscious charm which… to my mind conveyed a kind of meretriciousness and an intention to deceive". Goldie was among the fiercest advocates for television's right to cover contemporary affairs – yet even she could recognise its distorting lens.

GETTY IMAGES

Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell. The BBC's decision to air his response to Eden's broadcast drew government opprobrium

The decline of deference

Whatever the doubts, television could hardly be kept away from politics forever. Since no broadcasting from parliament was allowed, younger politicians in particular were ready to embrace the TV studio as a place from which they could reach their electorate directly. They saw, too, the necessity of not just looking the part, but also being quick on their feet.

By the end of the 1950s, not only was television overtaking radio in popularity, the launch of commercial broadcasting had also prompted a step-change in the way politicians were treated on air. ITN's star interviewer, Robin Day, set the tone through

The BBC from wireless to web
Listen to our podcast series with David Hendy on the history of the BBC at *historyextra.com/podcast*

his famously combative interviews. It was therefore a significant moment in the history of British TV journalism when he jumped to the BBC in 1959, and, during the 1960s, the corporation was nudged into an altogether less deferential approach by its new director general, Hugh Carleton Greene.

The cockpit of national debate was shifting: from the precincts of Westminster to Broadcasting House, Television Centre, and Lime Grove – the shabby but energetic base for the BBC's ambitious and rapidly expanding TV current affairs team. A decade after Suez, viewers were able to watch politicians having to account for their actions on heavyweight series such as *Panorama*. Listeners to the Home Service could catch William Hardcastle's quick-fire but authoritative probing of MPs on *The World at One*. A little over four years later, Day would host BBC radio's first regular phone-in, *It's Your Line*, in which politicians ranging from Enoch Powell to Barbara Castle would answer questions put to them directly by voters.

Politicians' increasing willingness to enter the gladiatorial arena of the studio came at a cost. There had always been friction between government and the BBC. But the rise to prominence of current affairs in the 1950s and 1960s – and the abandonment of an older, deferential approach among programme-makers – raised the stakes. The more fascinated the BBC became with politics, the more that politicians were going to take a close interest in the BBC. H

David Hendy is emeritus professor of media and cultural history at the University of Sussex. His most recent book is *The BBC: A People's History* (Profile, 2022)

Robin Day, whose move to the BBC in 1959 – and combative interviewing style – marked a new era in the way in which television covered politics

Voice of the establishment
Grace Wyndham Goldie in the 1950s. During the producer's tenure the BBC grew ever closer to the political elite

BBC/GETTY IMAGES

IN FOCUS The executive who set the agenda for the BBC's political programmes

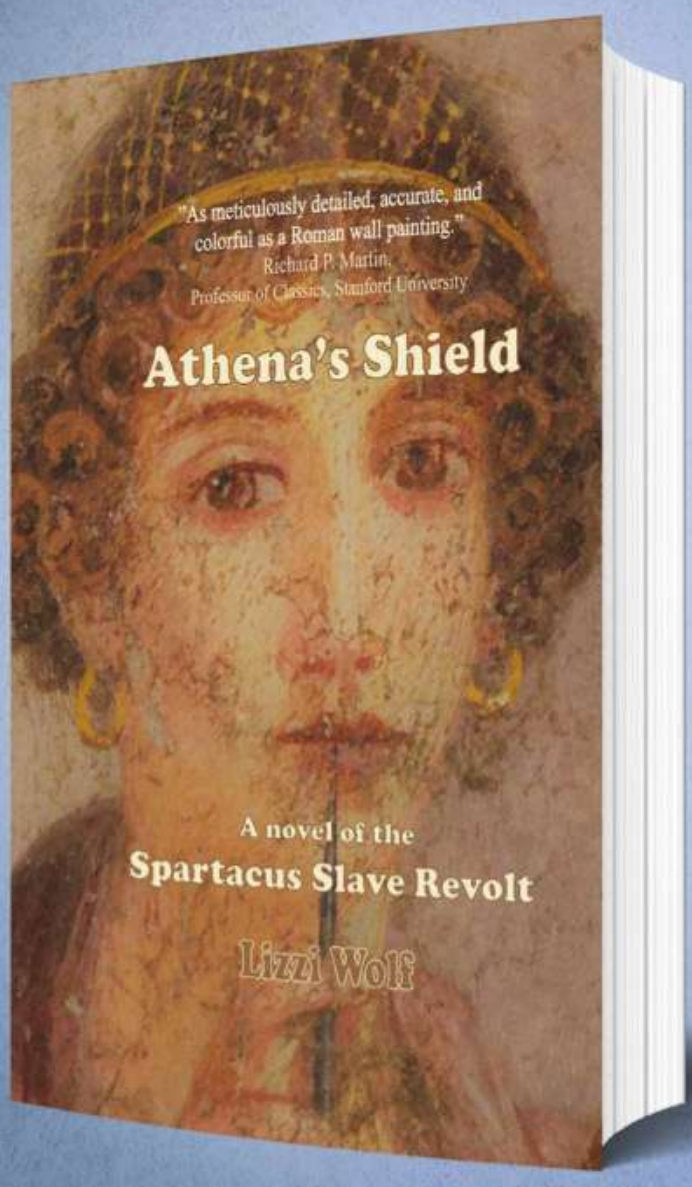
Grace Wyndham Goldie has been described as sharp-witted and practical as well as quixotic and something of a bully. She was also profoundly influential in shaping BBC Television's approach to the reporting of politics.

Her BBC career had begun in 1935, as a critic for *The Listener* magazine. But it was her wartime career as a civil servant that fired an interest in the worlds of Westminster and Whitehall. She had worked at the Board of Trade, organising food supplies to bomb-shattered cities. There, she had come to appreciate the "severe responsibilities" carried by politicians and civil servants.

When she later became head of BBC television's Current Affairs Group, that appreciation forged a culture in which programmes under her control tended to view topical events almost entirely from the rarefied summit of the British political establishment. Panellists on a series such as *In the News* – the Labour MP Michael Foot and Tory MP Bob Boothby became regulars – were relied on to provide the wit and common sense she saw as vital programme ingredients. As for achieving "balance", she trusted in her producers' editorial sensibility, believing they would instinctively know what was right without having to be constantly monitored.

There had long been a natural affinity between senior BBC staff and those who controlled the levers of state: a shared faith in applying rational solutions to the problems of society. But under Grace Wyndham Goldie the relationship was more intimate than ever. Her protégés in the Current Affairs Group – insiders called them Grace's "boys" – included not just bright young graduates but a cluster of ex- or future MPs: highly ambitious young men such as John Freeman, Christopher Mayhew, Michael Peacock, Alasdair Milne and Donald Baverstock. Their supreme self-confidence would eventually bring a heavyweight – and distinctly *un*deferential – energy to some of the BBC's most successful TV series of the 1950s and '60s, including *Panorama, Tonight*, and *That Was the Week That Was*.

> "There had long been an affinity between senior BBC staff and those who controlled the levers of state"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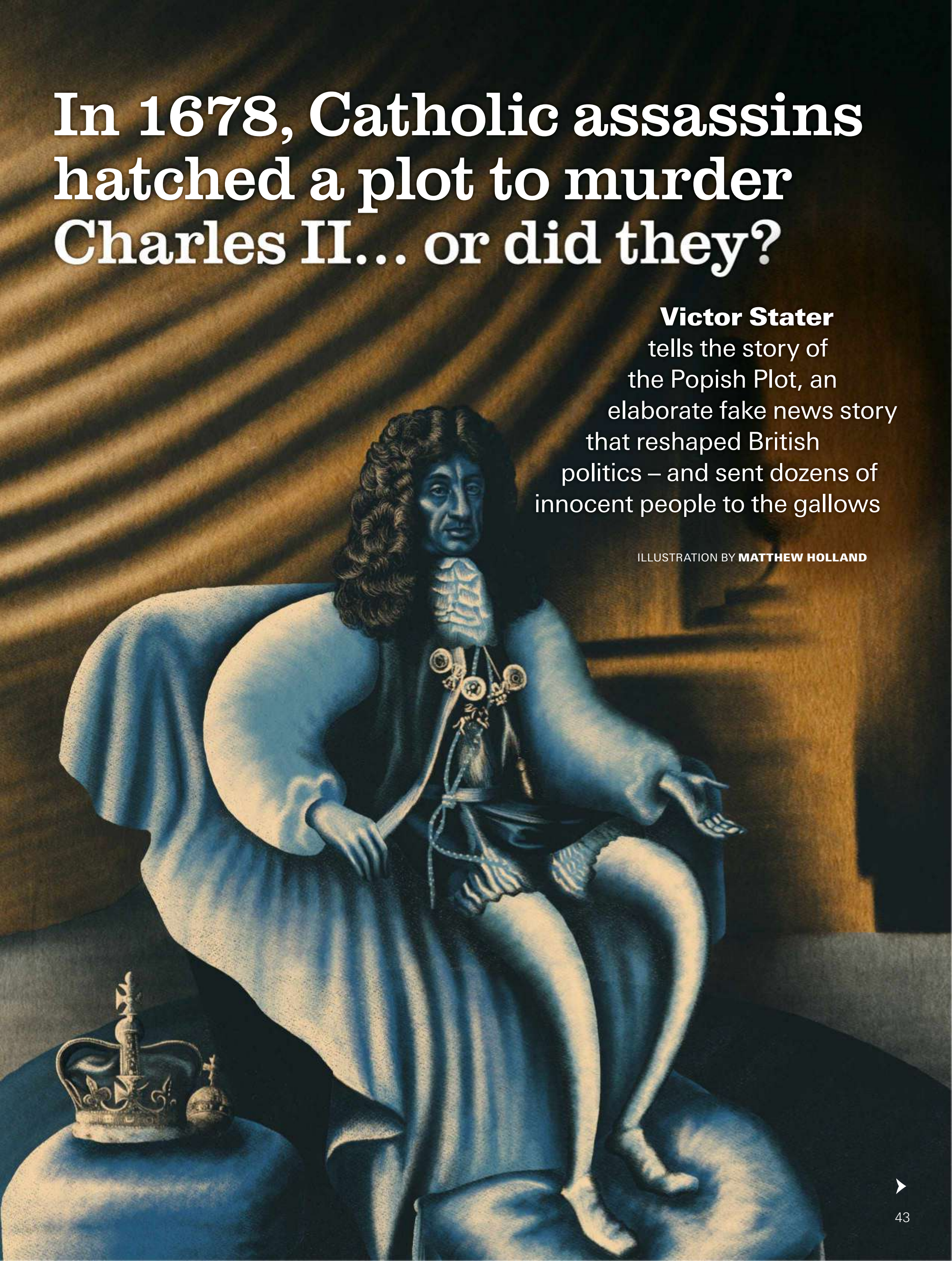
In 1678, Catholic assassins hatched a plot to murder Charles II… or did they?

Victor Stater tells the story of the Popish Plot, an elaborate fake news story that reshaped British politics – and sent dozens of innocent people to the gallows

ILLUSTRATION BY **MATTHEW HOLLAND**



Fake news. Misinformation. Disinformation. Today these are terms with which we are all too familiar. They exercise a powerful influence – enough to shape, or misshape, our political world. Modern society is highly polarised: Leavers versus Remainers, Republicans versus Democrats, each convinced that their opponents threaten everything good.

Yet this phenomenon is not a new one. England in the reign of Charles II was also highly polarised – providing the perfect backdrop for an elaborate hoax that catalysed the birth of two-party politics in Britain.

On 13 August 1678, as King Charles walked through the St James's district of central London, a minor courtier named Christopher Kirkby rushed up and exclaimed: "Sire, you might be assassinated on this very walk!"

The man whose information led Kirkby to make this breathless claim was Israel Tonge, a 56-year-old Anglican minister who blamed his professional disappointments on a Jesuit conspiracy. The Jesuits, he believed, feared him as one of their greatest enemies. In truth, his polemics were nigh unreadable, and his failure to progress was largely because he was perceived as mentally unbalanced. As one observer said: "Dr Tonge was hardly ever without a plot in his head and a pen in his hand."

Tonge had told Kirkby of a Jesuit-led conspiracy aiming to murder Charles and place his brother James, Duke of York, on the throne. James would then restore Catholicism using "popish" tyranny, and the Inquisition would wield fire and sword in England.

So Kirkby presented the king with Tonge's astonishing accusations. Irish assassins would ambush Charles in the park, Tonge claimed, using a handgun loaded with a silver bullet. Failing that, they would stab the king with daggers. Failing *that*, Sir George Wakeman – Queen Catherine's physician – had agreed to poison her husband.

Charles granted Tonge a short audience, and was unimpressed. The king, a canny judge of character, detected a wild-eyed paranoia he had seen before in the many misfits and fanatics he had known over the years. But his leading minister and Lord Treasurer – the Earl of Danby, Thomas Osborne – took the threat seriously, and urged Charles to launch an investigation.

Danby might well have feared a plot, but he had another motive for seeking more information. Facing a new parliamentary session, he expected considerable opposition from his enemies. If he presented himself as the scourge of Catholic conspirators, he might shore up support among MPs. Reluctantly, Charles allowed Danby and the Privy Council to investigate.

Contested successor
James, Duke of York, portrayed in a miniature of c1660/61. When he converted to Catholicism later that decade, his right to succeed his brother, Charles II, was challenged

The king, a canny judge of character, detected a wild-eyed paranoia he had seen before in many misfits and fanatics

Tonge's source was Titus Oates, an Anglican minister currently without a living, who had – he claimed – infiltrated the Jesuit mission in England in order to uncover its secrets. The Council interviewed Oates, who quickly became their principal informant. He provided a detailed account of the conspiracy, naming names and places, and accurately describing the underground Catholic community in London. Agog at these details – of not only the plot to murder the king but also of an English Catholic uprising to be led by prominent laymen – councillors found themselves convinced, "in greate pain and surprise", and authorised a series of searches and arrests.

There was one sceptic: Charles. Oates stumbled when describing the Spanish prince Don Juan, who Charles knew personally. Oates's version bore no resemblance to the real man.

Egregious liar

What Charles intuited about Titus Oates – that he was an egregious liar – was true. Oates, now a month short of his 29th birthday, had led a life marked by scandal. Raised as a dissenter, he saw the wisdom of conformity after the restoration of Charles II to the throne in 1660. He attended the University of Cambridge, running up debts and earning a reputation as "a great dunce" – but not a degree. He was given a living in Kent but soon fell out with his congregation, who accused him of drunkenness, blasphemy and even chicken theft.

Oates then found employment as a curate and schoolmaster in Hastings, but was quickly dismissed for sexually abusing his students – a charge he then levelled at a rival master, leading to a perjury charge. His next refuge was the Royal Navy, where he served as a chaplain until being accused of sodomy. By 1676, he was destitute in London.

Oates then presented himself to the head of the Jesuit mission, Richard Strange, who received Oates into the Catholic church in 1677 and sent him to Europe for religious instruction. There he was expelled from two English Catholic colleges for blasphemy and pederasty. By the summer of 1678, back in London and falsely claiming to have earned a doctorate in Spain, Oates was in a desperate position. Now rejected by London's Catholics, he used his acquaintance with Tonge to launch his fabrication, hoping to win fame and fortune.

As the search for the alleged plotter kicked into gear, Oates's inside knowledge of the Catholic community was invaluable. With his help, dozens of Catholic clergy were

Plot spoiler
The Earl of Danby, Charles II's Lord Treasurer. Having led the court investigation into the "plot", Danby was later brought down by opponents in parliament

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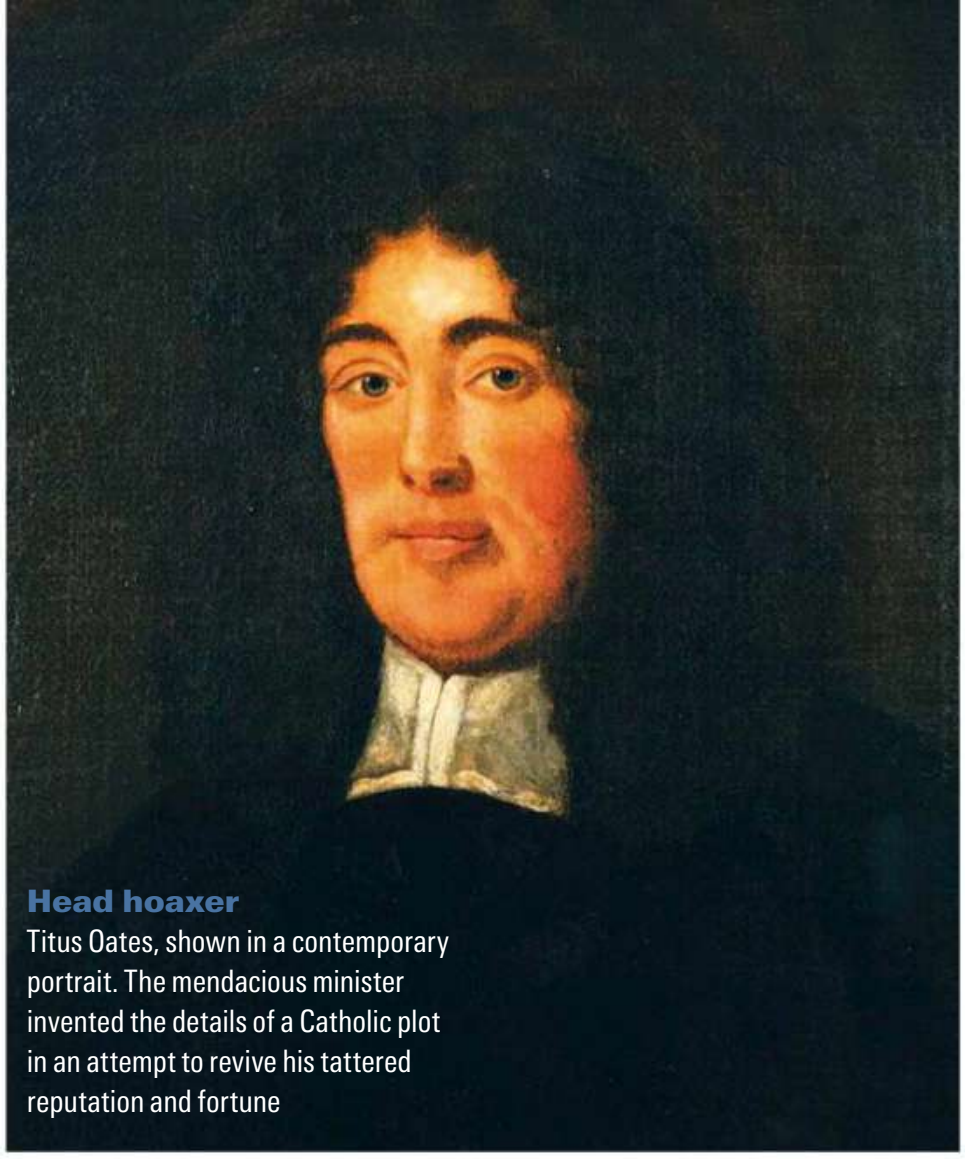

Head hoaxer
Titus Oates, shown in a contemporary portrait. The mendacious minister invented the details of a Catholic plot in an attempt to revive his tattered reputation and fortune

Loyal brother Charles II, c1685. The king authorised an investigation into Oates' claims but resisted the exclusion from the succession of his brother, the Duke of York

Conspiracy of lies Engravings illustrating the late 17th-century broadside ballad "A True Narrative of the Horrid Hellish Popish-Plot" depict key scenes from the episode: ❶ Titus Oates (right) infiltrates London's Jesuit mission; ❷ Oates swears loyalty to the Jesuits; ❸ Catholic plotters conceal gunpowder in sewage; ❹ Oates reveals the "plot" to the king and his council; ❺ challenged on contradictions in his testimony, Oates blames poor eyesight; ❻ Jesuit priests are hanged and quartered, based on Oates' perjured testimony

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rounded up in London, and a hidden infrastructure was uncovered. The revelation of Jesuit colleges, of Jesuit-owned property providing income to the order, and of a secret Benedictine residence in London, created a sense that Catholicism had made dangerous inroads in England.

Two unforeseen developments further panicked the nation. First, a search of the lodgings of Edward Colman – former secretary to the Duchess of York, James's wife – uncovered copies of letters to high-ranking Catholics in Europe, boasting of his efforts to advance the faith in England. One letter, written in 1675, urged Louis XIV to support "the conversion of our poor kingdom, which has been a long time oppressed… with heresy and schism".

Then, soon after the discovery of Colman's letters, the prominent London magistrate Sir Edmund Godfrey disappeared. Oates had told Godfrey about the plot so, when a passer-by discovered the latter's strangled body, the immediate assumption was that he had been murdered by Catholics (the strong possibility of suicide being ignored). These events increased Oates's credibility – even though none of Colman's letters were dated later than 1675, and none referred to an assassination plot.

Panic on the streets of London

By October 1678, anti-Catholic panic was gripping the nation, fuelled by wild rumours of impending invasion and massacres. Londoners armed themselves with souvenir "Godfrey daggers" to ward off Jesuit attacks, and the city's presses poured out pamphlets and broadsides sounding the alarm.

Those alarms rose to an even higher pitch when a new session of parliament opened in late October. Lord Danby, who had once hoped to use the plot to strengthen his position, soon found rivals with the same idea. His opponents in parliament intended to bring him down by accusing him of obstructing the investigation. Chief among them was the Earl of Shaftesbury, who said: "Let the Lord Treasurer cry as loud as he pleases against popery… I will cry a note louder and soon take his place." This he proceeded to do. Parliament summoned Oates to testify, and his appearance riveted both houses. Shaftesbury led the charge, saying: "We must support the evidence… all those who undermined the credit of the witnesses were to be considered public enemies."

Oates's allegations soon attracted supporters, often shady characters seeking rewards offered by the crown. In November, a man calling himself Captain William Bedloe corroborated many of Oates's claims. Like Oates, Bedloe was a liar and a criminal, dabbling in horse theft, counterfeiting and a variety of petty thefts and swindles.

Shaftesbury exploited the stories told by these characters to politicise the plot. He guided parliament's investigation, summoning witnesses before his committee, imprisoning some and threatening others with treason charges if they refused to cooperate.

Yet, as he did so, parliament's investigation was steadily diverging from the Privy Council's (some of whose members still genuinely believed in the plot). What's more, scepticism was growing at court. Indeed, in late November Danby confronted Oates in Whitehall, predicting that he would hang.

By December 1678, though, Oates and Bedloe had forged an alliance with Shaftesbury. They accused Danby of "stifling" the plot's investigation, and infuriated King Charles by directly implicating Queen Catherine. "I heard the queen say," Oates testified, "she would… revenge the violation of her bed." Oates was, in effect, alleging that Charles's many adulteries provided Catherine with a motive for murder.

The opposition's real target, however, was Charles' brother. Shaftesbury had been on bad terms with the Duke of York for years, and his prospects under a future King James were dim. So early in January 1679, as the first trials of the accused plotters got under way – trials in which Oates and Bedloe were crucial witnesses – the plot evolved into a political crusade to destroy the Duke of York. Danby's ministry was brought to an end by a trumped-up impeachment; he was falsely accused of plotting treason with the French, and the king reluctantly accepted his treasurer's resignation. Ironically, the main charges against the earl came from men who regularly received French bribes, Louis XIV long having wanted Danby's dismissal, considering him to be hostile to French interests.

The opposition's hijacking of the plot derailed the crown's agenda in parliament. Threats against the queen and the Duke of York, now openly accused of treason, pushed the king to dissolve parliament. Charles hoped that elections would return a more cooperative body, but he was badly mistaken.

The excitement generated by the plot was reinforced by ongoing treason trials. Oates and Bedloe added increasingly lurid details to their testimony, amplifying fears of popish conspiracy. Edward Colman was convicted of treason and executed. Nine Jesuits were also put to death, including the head of the English mission, Thomas Whitbread. Judges and juries were relentlessly hostile to Catholic defendants, whether they were humble servants such as Robert Green, who laid out cushions in the Queen's Chapel, or men of high rank such as William Howard, Viscount Stafford. The saintly Oliver Plunkett, Catho-

Murder most doubtful
A print of c1678 imagines the violent murder by Jesuit plotters of London magistrate Sir Edmund Godfrey, who had gone missing some years earlier – and who may have killed himself. His death fuelled demand for defensive souvenir "Godfrey daggers", a rare example of which is shown (right)

An anti-Catholic panic gripped the nation, fuelled by wild rumours of impending invasion and massacres

TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM/CHRISTIE'S IMAGES LTD 2003

Why was Britain ripe for Oates's hoax plot?
Victor Stater will be discussing the Popish Plot on a forthcoming episode of the HistoryExtra podcast: *historyextra.com/podcast*

lic archbishop of Armagh – widely admired even by Irish Protestants – suffered at the hands of a biased court, too. Altogether, the courts sentenced two dozen Catholics, lay and clerical, to death based on the perjuries of Titus Oates and his fellow informers.

The panic generated by these trials ensured that anti-Catholicism was the only issue in parliamentary elections. The result was a House of Commons whose only goal was the removal of James, Duke of York from the succession. When the Commons assembled in spring 1679, it drafted an exclusion bill (which would have blocked James, as a Catholic, from becoming king), supported by a majority of MPs. The king, though, forestalled the bill's passage by once more dissolving the parliament just months after it first sat.

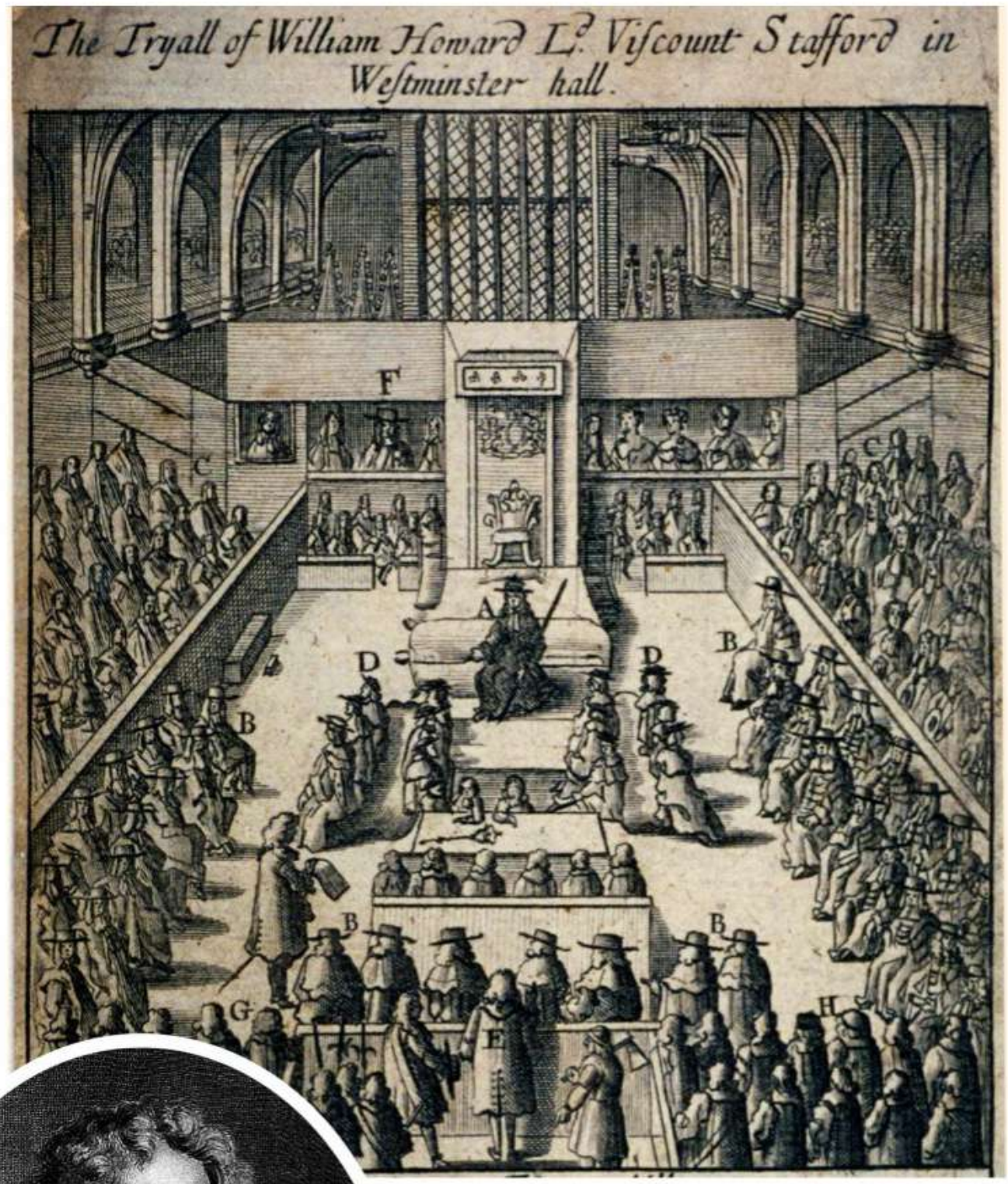
Widening divisions

In the aftermath of this latest dissolution, tempers grew short and divisions widened. Scepticism about the "plot" spread. "Suppose," wrote Roger L'Estrange, one of its fiercest critics, "my boy should come in and tell me it rains buttered turnips. I should… open the window to see if it be so or no, and you would not blame me for doubting, either." The unbroken string of convictions of "plotters" ended when, in July 1679, Sir George Wakeman, the Queen's doctor, won an acquittal – possibly aided by unseen pressure from the royal court – igniting a firestorm. A dead dog was thrown into the coach of the presiding judge, and Exclusionists – supporters of the exclusion bill – accused the jury of accepting bribes.

This excitement generated still more heat in elections held only weeks later. Again Exclusionists emerged victorious, and again the king defended his brother: a further dissolution followed and no exclusion bill was passed, to Shaftesbury's chagrin.

Having tried and failed to co-opt the earl by naming him president of the Privy Council, Charles concluded that decisive action was required. Until now, he had allowed elections to take their course. No longer. He summoned a new parliament, and signalled his determination to re-establish control by choosing Oxford, a royalist stronghold, as its venue.

Charles made headway against his opponents – now generally described as "Whigs" (see boxout on page 48) – but when the Oxford parliament met on 21 March 1681, many feared civil war. Shaftesbury entered the city with a large escort of armed supporters, and his opponents – dubbed "Tories" by their enemies – expected open



Trial by peers An engraving of 1680 shows the trial of William Howard, Viscount Stafford – one of several Catholics executed for treason having been falsely implicated in the "plot" by Titus Oates

Political predator The Earl of Shaftesbury, in an 18th-century engraving. He saw the investigation as a way of preventing the Duke of York, with whom he was on bad terms, from becoming king

Criminal conspirator The frontispiece illustration for a 1681 biography of William Bedloe, a thief and fraudster who corroborated many of Titus Oates' claims and contributed to the furore about the imaginary plot

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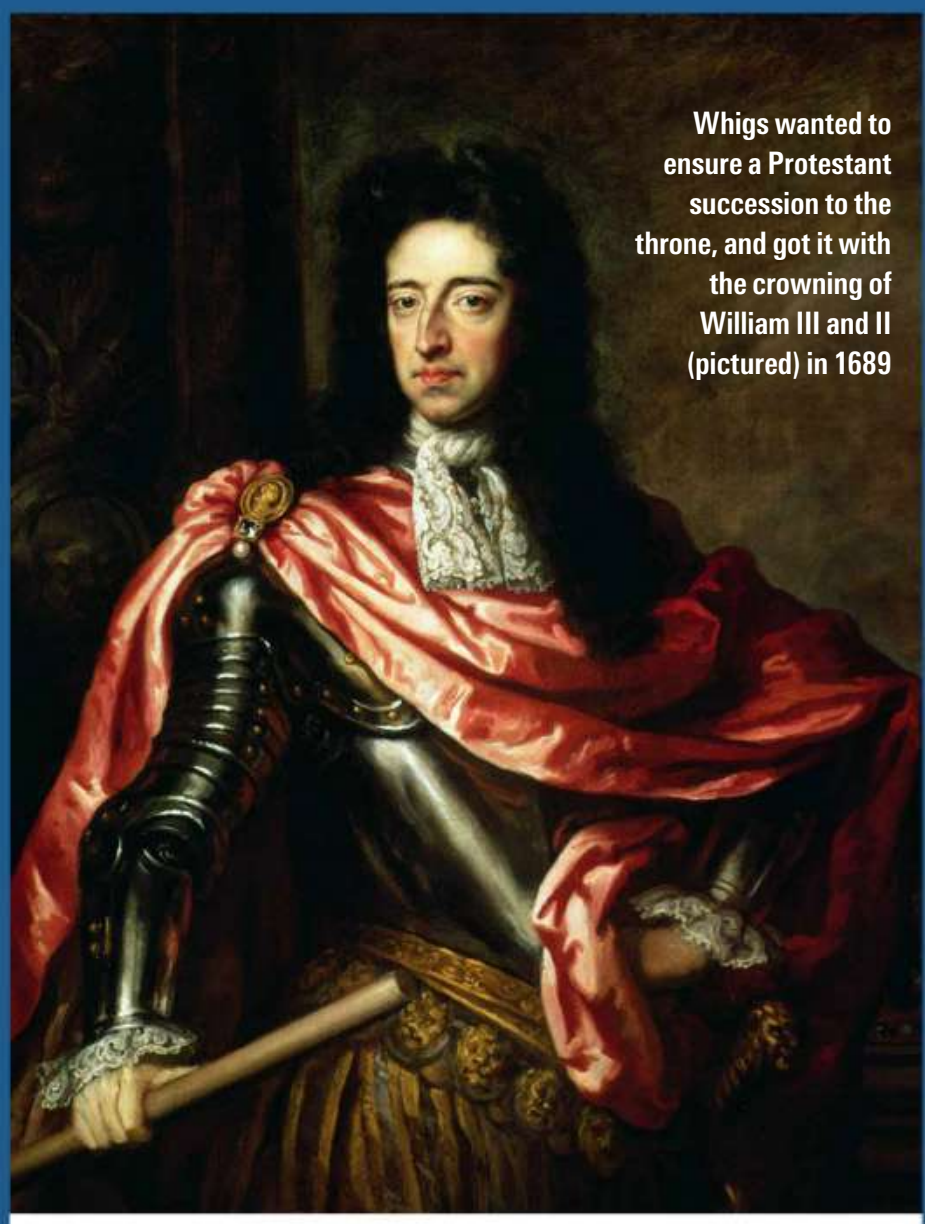
Political heavyweights

THE TWO DOMINANT PARTIES BORN OUT OF THE POPISH PLOT



Whigs wanted to ensure a Protestant succession to the throne, and got it with the crowning of William III and II (pictured) in 1689

Tories battle Whigs in a contemporary cartoon. The Tories' fortunes plummeted in the 18th century but revived after the French Revolution

Whigs: Catholic-fearing Exclusionists

The Whig Party coalesced during the 1679–81 struggle over the exclusion of James, Duke of York from the succession. The party's name originated as a term of abuse: a "Whiggamore" (later shortened to "Whig") was a Scottish Presbyterian extremist.

Opponents of exclusion aimed to identify its supporters as the kind of radicals they held responsible for the Civil War and regicide of the mid-17th century. Whigs feared Catholics, sympathised with Protestant dissenters, and opposed what they described as "arbitrary government". They fervently believed (or in some cases pretended to believe) in the reality of Titus Oates's hoax. They wanted to ensure a Protestant succession to the throne and to place limits on royal power.

They failed to prevent James II and VII from taking the throne, but ultimately achieved their main goals in the aftermath of the revolution of 1688, which installed William III and II on the throne. The Whig Party dominated 18th-century politics, ultimately evolving into the Liberals of the 19th century.

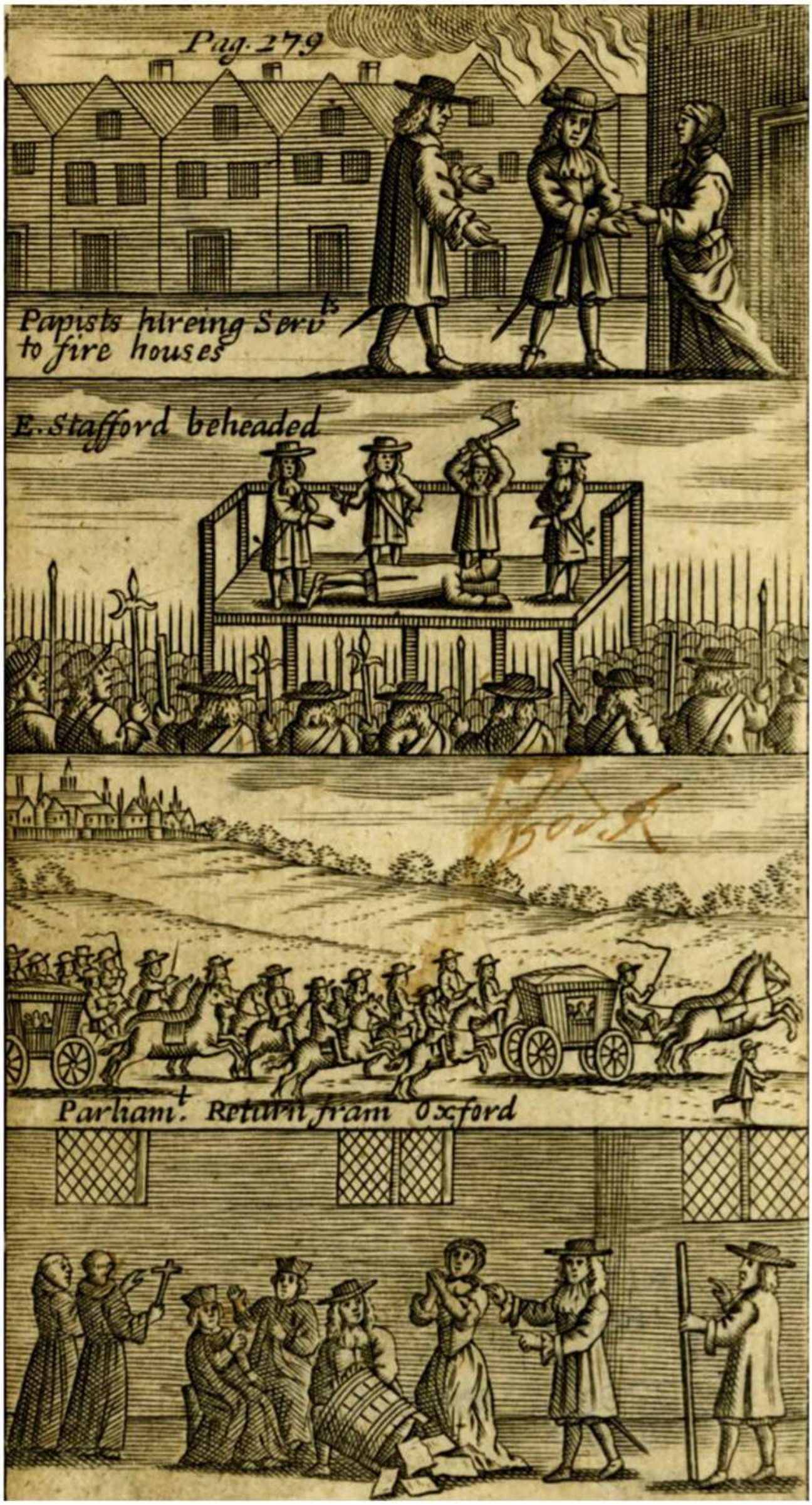
Tories: Supporters of the Duke of York

The Tories were also forged in the crucible of the Popish Plot. The name was, like "Whig", initially intended to be a slander. The original Tories were Catholic Irish rebels, evicted from their lands by Protestant settlers and surviving by banditry and opportunistic attacks on Protestants. The name associated anti-Exclusionists with Catholicism and, as supporters of the Catholic Duke of York, they were accused of rejecting the reality of Oates's testimony.

Many Tories came from royalist families, and dreaded a renewal of civil war. Generally they feared Protestant dissenters more than Catholics, and wanted to enforce the Church of England's monopoly of faith.

Tory dominance did not long outlive Charles II. They fell out with James II and VII over his efforts to advance Catholicism, but continued to support the hereditary succession; some rejected the revolution of 1688 and worked to restore the Stuart dynasty. Eclipsed for most of the 18th century, the party's fortunes revived in the era of the French Revolution. Tories are the direct ancestors of the modern Conservative party.

BRIDGEMAN/ALAMY



TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Picturing the plot Etchings for the 1681 book *The Plot in a Dream*, purportedly revealing the "designs of the papists against the king" and reflecting widespread anti-Catholic sentiment. The images show conspirators recruiting arsonists, Stafford's execution, the return of the Oxford Parliament, and the discovery of incriminating papers

treason. This parliament lasted only a week: the Commons immediately embraced exclusion, and Charles dissolved it yet again.

In the aftermath of the Oxford parliament, Charles II became the leader of what now should be described as the Tory party. Tories were committed both to the established succession and to maintaining the dominance of the Church of England – and, unsurprisingly, Charles kept them in power for the rest of his life. Meanwhile, he purged Exclusionists from office and used his power to prevent any further parliamentary elections. Denied their parliamentary platform, Shaftesbury and the other Whig leaders engaged in plots of their own. In 1683, the crown uncovered a Whig conspiracy to assassinate Charles. Shaftesbury fled into exile, and several other prominent Whigs were sent to the scaffold.

The struggle to exclude James led England once gain to the brink of civil war – yet no war erupted. In 1642, divisions this deep had triggered violence as royalists and parliamentarians tried to eradicate their opponents. Thanks to the evolution of the two parties, however, England could now manage political divisions peacefully. Whigs and Tories would continue to hate one another, to be sure, but they never went to war – militarily, at least.

Titus Oates' "Popish Plot" was a monstrous hoax. His perjured testimony, and that of his fellow liars, sent two dozen innocents to the gallows. Many others died in prison. Oates, however, faced no such fate. He survived a perjury conviction after the Duke of York succeeded his brother to the throne in 1685 (as James II and VII), and then re-emerged a Whig hero after William III and II seized James's crown in the revolution of 1688.

Tonge and Bedloe both died in 1680, with Oates following in 1705. By then the plot he had invented catalysed the formation of two-party politics in England. This system has since become the standard in the English-speaking world, and continues to manage – more or less successfully – political conflict to this day. It is small consolation for those unjustly executed, but the outcome of the "plot" might just have averted renewed civil war in Britain, and created a way to avoid political violence for the future. H

Victor Stater is a professor of history at Louisiana State University. His latest book, *Hoax: The Catholic Plot that Never Was*, was published by Yale in June

Hear Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss the "plot" on BBC Radio 4's **In Our Time** at: *bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b079rbcj*

The enduring

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON © FONDATION HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON

Disrupted lives
A train carries Muslims from Delhi to Lahore, 1947. The partition of British India triggered one of the largest refugee crises in history

Accompanies Kavita Puri's BBC Radio 4 programme **Inheritors of Partition**

BBC RADIO 4

In 1947, British India was split in two, sparking a wave of violence that defined the new nations for decades. On the 75th anniversary of partition, **Kavita Puri** looks at how subsequent generations in south Asia and the UK have come to terms with its legacy

trauma of partition

75 years ago, Britain's control over 400 million people on the Indian subcontinent ceased. It was the beginning of the end of the British empire. On 14 August 1947, people in Pakistan proudly marked the creation of the new dominion with a ceremony in Karachi, attended by the governor-general Muhammed Ali Jinnah. A day later, led by India's new prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Indians celebrated the British departure. British India had been carved up into two countries, Pakistan and India, largely along religious lines. The former included East Pakistan, separated from West Pakistan by almost 1,000 miles.

The movement for independence had begun many decades earlier. The British had formally arrived in India in the 1600s, establishing trading posts under the British East India Company, and India came under direct British rule in 1858. The nationalist movement began in the late 19th century and gained huge momentum following the Second World War – a conflict in which 2.5 million soldiers from what is today India, Pakistan and Bangladesh served.

As religious identity became stronger – stoked, many commentators have argued, by British policies of divide and rule – two competing visions of independence emerged, which grew increasingly politicised along religious lines. The Congress Party, led by Nehru, wanted India to remain united in a secular state once the British left. But by 1940, Jinnah, leader of the Muslim League, felt that India's almost 100 million Muslims – a quarter of the population – would be marginalised by the Hindu majority. He wanted safeguards to be put in place, and even a separate homeland.

The endgame of empire was conducted against a backdrop of rising communal violence across northern India, as people from the "other" religion were targeted. Before, there had been localised communal violence but this was on a different scale altogether. The watershed moment was the Calcutta Killings of August 1946. Jinnah had called a "Direct Action Day" in favour of the establishment of Pakistan, but it precipitated thousands of deaths of Muslims and Hindus. Unrest and bloodshed then spread to Noakhali, Tippera, Bihar and close to Delhi and then, from early 1947 onwards, to the major cities in Punjab.

This violence, from the summer of 1946 on, was related to the end of empire and the contest for power and territory, and sought to humiliate and even destroy those of the "other" religion. In some cases, it involved a high degree of planning and organisation by paramilitary groups. In other cases, people carried out attacks in response to killings or abductions in their own communities.

By early 1947, the British government under Clement Attlee announced it would leave India by June 1948 at the latest. The pressing political question became not *when* the British would go, but what India's future would look like once the British had departed. This was the context in which discussions of the exit strategy of the British from colonial India took place between Viceroy Lord Louis Mountbatten, Nehru and Jinnah.

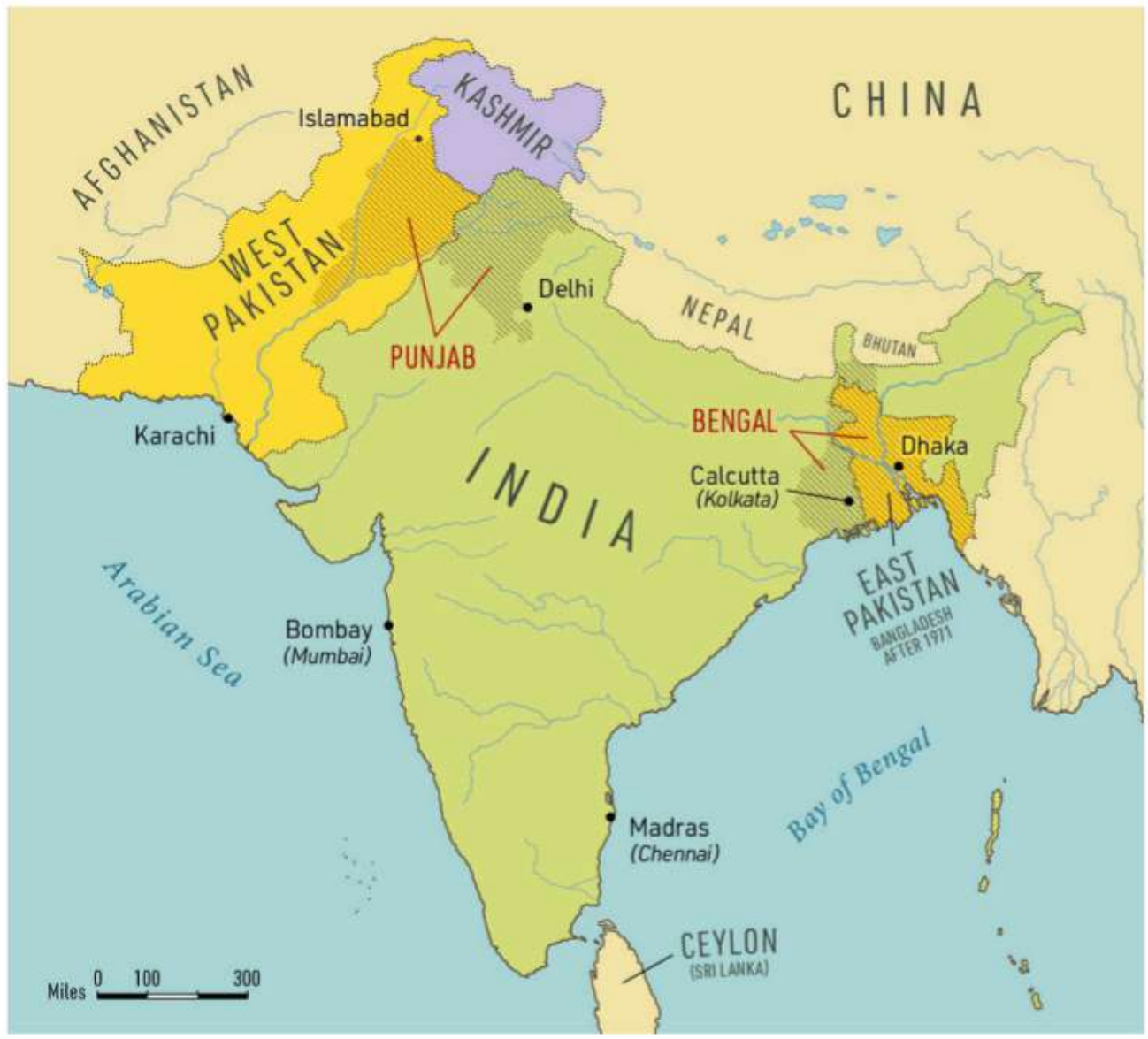
On 3 June 1947, Mountbatten gave a momentous address on All India Radio, in which he said: "There can be no question of coercing any large areas in which one community has a majority to live against their will under a government in which another community has a majority – and the only alternative to coercion is partition."

A hasty retreat
Cyril Radcliffe, the lawyer charged with implementing partition in British India. The process of drawing the boundary line took just 40 days – after which, Radcliffe immediately left

Nehru had reluctantly agreed to the plan. The provinces of Bengal and Punjab would be divided: areas in which Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims had lived closely together for generations, speaking the same language with a shared culture, food and traditions. To divide them was a virtually impossible task. Mountbatten also announced that the transfer date would be moved earlier. Partition would now take place in a breathtaking 10 weeks.

Cyril Radcliffe, a British lawyer who had

DIVIDED COMMUNITIES India and Pakistan after partition



ALAMY

MAP BY **PAUL HEWITT – BATTLEFIELD DESIGN**

Religious schisms
Violence erupts in Calcutta (now Kolkata) in August 1946. Tensions between Muslim and Hindu communities escalated in the months before partition

The pressing political question became not when the British would go, but instead what India would look like once the British had departed

Meeting of minds
Lord Mountbatten (third left) with (left to right) Indian nationalist leader Jawaharlal Nehru; Mountbatten's chief of staff, Lord Ismay; and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, future leader of Pakistan, June 1947. That month, Mountbatten announced his plans for partition on Indian national radio

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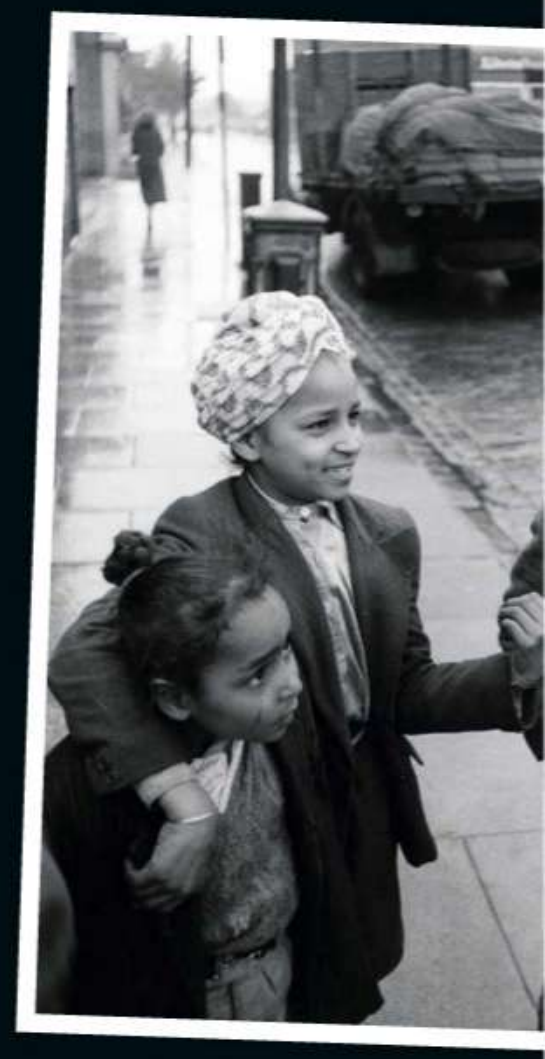
Mass exodus
People in the city of Amritsar check migration information after partition, 1947. The journey to find a new home was often fraught with danger



New lives
Three young Sikh members of London's Indian community, pictured in 1955. In the years immediately after partition, many people who arrived in Britain from south Asia were reluctant to speak about their experiences

Meeting the people
Lord Mountbatten and his wife, Edwina, in New Delhi in August 1947. He would go on to serve as India's first governor-general until June 1948

These were stories of painful goodbyes and of a profound, enduring loss of leaving behind a land that had been lived in for so long

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Partition: an expert guide
Anwesha Roy tackles the key questions on the HistoryExtra podcast: *historyextra.com/podcast*

never visited India before, had 40 days in which to draw a boundary line. He stayed mainly at Mountbatten's house in Delhi surrounded by maps, sub-missions and reports. He never once visited the places that he had been tasked with dissecting.

Remarkably, while celebrations in India and Pakistan were under way on 14 and 15 August 1947, no one knew where the boundary line was to be drawn. That detail wouldn't be announced until 17 August, by which time Radcliffe was already on a plane out of India. Writing to his stepson, he noted: "Nobody in India will love me for the award about the Punjab and Bengal, and there will be roughly 80 million people with a grievance who will begin looking for me. I do not want them to find me." He reportedly burned his papers and never returned.

Mass migration

The former colonial authorities and new Indian and Pakistani governments had not anticipated what would happen next. Finding themselves a minority in their new countries, people left the places they had called home for generations, carrying what they could as they made treacherous journeys by foot, train or – if they were fortunate – plane. Hindus and Sikhs migrated to India, while Muslims fled to Pakistan. In the months immediately following partition, between 10 and 12 million people were on the move in these opposite directions – the largest migration in history outside war and famine.

It was a migration fraught with danger and violence: an estimated 1 million people were killed, and around 75,000 women and young girls were raped, abducted or forced to undergo religious conversion.

The fledgling countries of India and Pakistan descended into chaos and bloodshed, with the British army given orders not to intervene. This painful birth shaped the identities of the two new nations.

It was not the end of the violence in the region, either. East and West Pakistan were largely united in religion but there were profound differences in language, culture and proximity to the seat of power in Islamabad. In 1971, against huge resistance from West Pakistan, East Pakistan fought for its independence and became Bangladesh.

Because of this violence and brutality, the anniversary of partition is always bittersweet, mixing happiness at independence with pain at the devastation and loss that ensued. Indeed, when we think about partition it is easy to be overwhelmed by the statistics. Yet it's important to remember that behind every single number is a human story, even if they can be hard to find in the official documents of the time.

Five years ago, for the 70th anniversary, I led the BBC's *Partition Voices* project, in which I spoke to British south Asian and colonial British eyewitnesses about this traumatic time. After issuing callouts to see if anyone wanted to tell their stories, I was shocked to find that there were too many to record. These were testimonies of epic migrations, of horror, of painful goodbyes and friends never seen again – and of a profound, enduring loss of leaving behind a land that had been lived in for so long. After 70 years, these eyewitnesses paint a complex picture. Of course there was violence. But they also want people to remember that they lived at a time of deep ties and friendships between the religions in undivided India, and that neighbours, friends and strangers transcended hate to help save and rescue people of the "other" religion.

What endures after all these years is a strong attachment to the place that was left. So many who had never returned in seven decades said they still wanted to do so one last time before they died. They hoped to see their childhood home, to see if the best friend they had no time to say goodbye to was alive or whether the tree they played in still stood. These first-hand accounts are now kept in the British Library Sound Archive, where they can be read alongside official political and civil-service documents.

The 70th anniversary was significant because silence had for so long shrouded so many partition stories. The 2011 census reveals that, a decade ago, there were 3 million people in England and Wales with south Asian heritage, and the 70th anniversary began to show how many British south Asians have a connection to, or a story about, partition. In the postwar years, many of those who came to Britain from the Indian subcontinent were from areas disrupted by partition, including Punjab, Sylhet and Mirpur. People often arrived with traumatic memories, but never spoke of them. They were trying to forge a new life, and there was no time to look to the past. Unlike on the Indian subcontinent, in those early years in Britain, Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus have largely worked together to fight for equality and against racism.

But that wasn't the only reason for the silence. In partition, people on all sides did terrible things that aren't easy to speak about. There is an institutional silence, too: partition is not taught widely in schools, and there was no public space to speak of it.

Five years ago, TV and radio programmes marking the anniversary focused for the first time on lived experiences within the diaspora. As silence gradually began to break, subsequent generations of British south Asians realised this was a story taking place within their own families – and one which they may have heard only fragments of, if at all. I was surprised by how many of those contacting me did not even know the word "partition". Scrolling through comments on social media following the broadcasts, it seemed to me that British people were starting to understand the scale of the historical event, and to realise this was not about somewhere far away, but a legacy persisting within these isles today.

Voices from the past

Since then, much has changed. In homes across Britain there has been a quiet awakening within families, particularly from the third or even fourth generation, as people try to understand their family history. Many have been in touch asking about the best way to broach the subject. For some it is already too late, as those from the partition generation have died, meaning that they have to find other ways to research their past.

But the way in which we talk about the British empire and its aftermath has changed, too. It has become a noisy national conversation, a process accelerated by the Black Lives Matter protests following the murder of George Floyd by a police officer in the United States in 2020. Those protests sparked calls for a more inclusive telling of history within the curriculum, one including the stories of black, Asian and minority ethnic groups and offering a better understanding of the violence and exploitation of Britain's colonial past and the nation's ties to empire and migration.

In the past five years, a whole host of oral histories have been recorded of the experiences of the partition generation– not just in Britain, but in the Indian subcontinent and the diaspora, too. In India, testimonies of the lived experience started to be documented from the late 1990s, beginning with Urvashi Butalia's groundbreaking 1998 book *The Other Side of Silence*. But historians working at the time of the 50th and 60th anniversaries, both here and on the Indian subcontinent, realised that many people were still not ready to speak about partition widely.

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Refugee crisis
Refugees board a Soviet aeroplane on the outskirts of Calcutta having been displaced from East Pakistan, 1971. More than 10 million people fled to India during the war with West Pakistan

There is another, contradictory emotion that can be passed on from the partition generation: a deep attachment to the place left behind

A complicated past
The Partition Museum in Amritsar, inaugurated in 2017. The legacy of the events of 1947 remains a complex one on the subcontinent

Oral historian Anam Zakaria, whose paternal grandparents migrated from India to Pakistan, is the author of the 2015 book *The Footprints of Partition: Narratives of Four Generations of Pakistanis and Indians*. Zakaria says that, although significant efforts are now taking place to archive the memory of partition, these testimonies are being recorded at the same time that "a dehumanisation and demonisation of the 'other' also prevails, due to certain stories of partition being appropriated or silenced by the state to foster its own national projects". As a result, younger generations – who are increasingly curious about partition – can have a selective narrative of one-sided violence. Yet that's why oral histories of partition are so important: because they offer a more nuanced picture. "While official histories tend to homogenise experiences, oral histories offer a way to understand the varied experiences across class, caste, gender, religion, geography and more," she says.

And, for the first time, oral historians have begun to look into what is passed on through the generations – knowingly or unknowingly – through both trauma and nostalgia. Aanchal Malhotra's grandparents lived and migrated from what became Pakistan, and her bestselling book *In the Language of Remembering* explores this inheritance. She memorably describes it as "second-hand sadness, second-hand loss, second-hand pain", and asks: "Can all these emotions still be felt in their second-handedness?" Malhotra argues that, on the Indian subcontinent, this bequeathed trauma can be mixed up with a sense of present-day nationalism and an anger towards the people that caused their family members to leave. She says there are specific regions in which people are still particularly vulnerable to the after-effects and disruptions of partition, including north-east India and Kashmir. For them, she argues, "partition is an everyday thing".

But there is another, contradictory emotion that can be passed on from the partition generation: a deep attachment to the place left behind. Those who could return often take a memento – a stone, a tile, a brick – as evidence that they lived in that land once. That remnant of a previous existence lives today in homes in Britain. Malhotra has seen it in her many recordings with descendants in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh as well as the diaspora; and I have experienced it in Britain, too – sometimes quite viscerally.

One of my interviewees, Sparsh, wears a pebble around his neck from the ancestral home in what is Pakistan that his grandfather fled; Binita's fireplace in Manchester contains soil from today's Bangladesh, the place where her father was born and from which he then escaped; and Maz has a family heirloom from her Pakistani grandmother, a sari from India. These are profound ties to the places their ancestors left, which shape how they think of their already complex identities as part of the diaspora. Malhotra believes there is now a reckoning starting on a personal level, that some in the younger generation are coming to terms with the word "partition", and what it means to them.

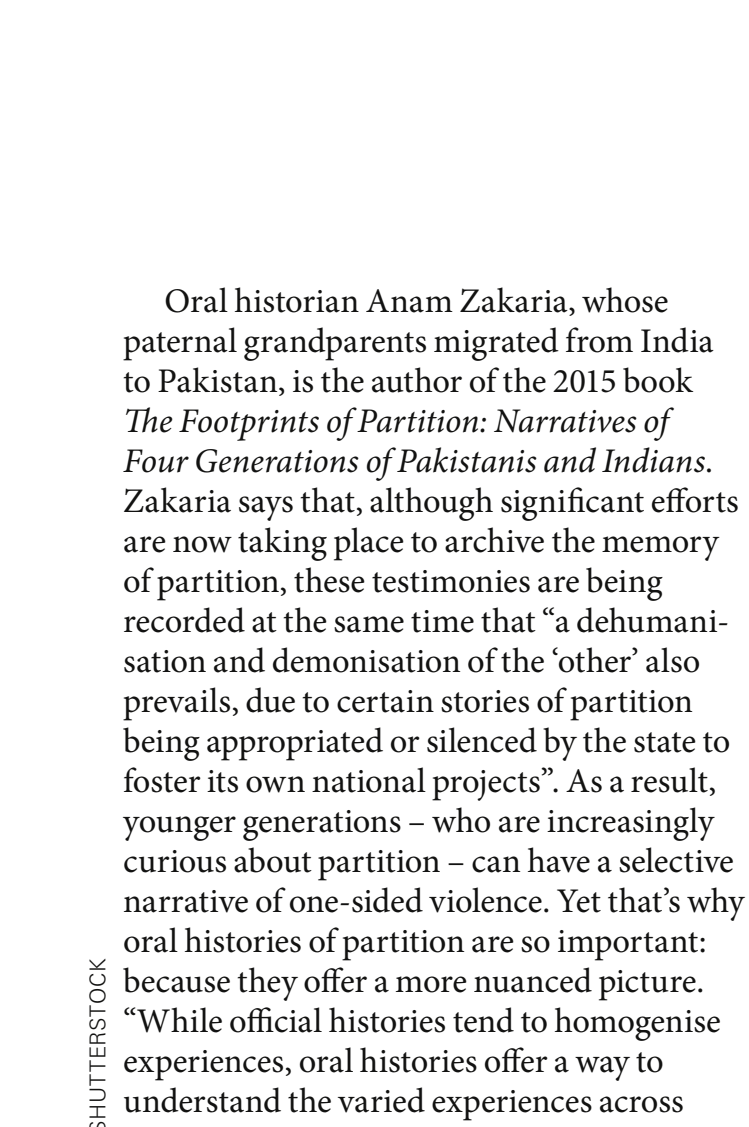
Remembering and forgetting

On the Indian subcontinent, however, there is no such collective or national reckoning. There is no memorial marking the lives lost or those who migrated overseas. Malhotra argues that in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, there is no shared understanding of what happened because it meant different things for different people. "For India, it meant the loss of territory, the loss of people," she says. "For Pakistan, it was the gaining of nationhood. And for Bangladesh, [the conflict of] 1971 overshadows much of 1947." She believes that, for any form of reckoning and reconciliation to take place on the subcontinent, there needs to be a shared understanding of the truth of what happened. That would mean reaching an awareness of the full complexity of partition, as well as a recognition that all sides were culpable, just as all sides suffered.

That seems far off. In 2021, India's prime minister, Narendra Modi, announced that on 14 August, the day on which Pakistan marks its independence, India will hold "Partition Horrors Remembrance Day" to remind India of its suffering and sacrifices. The fear is that this could stoke old hatreds, emphasising the horrors of the era from only one side rather than focusing on a sense of shared anguish or people's more peaceful memories of life in undivided India.

It is always a choice for an individual, or the state, to remember, or forget. Seventy-five years on, the personal and national are colliding, and the eyewitness generation are just about still with us. The inheritors of this difficult history here and on the Indian subcontinent must decide what is passed on, both within families and nationally. On the Indian subcontinent, it is a moment to decide whether to use the memory to heal, or to weaponise it to foster divisive nationalism. In Britain, it is a moment to reflect on empire and its end, to tell the story fully, and explain why Britain looks the way it does today. Both here and on the Indian subcontinent, we are only just at the beginning of grappling with the complex legacy of partition. H

Politicising the past?
Narendra Modi, prime minister of India, in June 2022. His decision to mark "Partition Horrors Remembrance Day" has sparked fears that the nation's history is being used for political ends



AANCHAL MALHOTRA/SHUTTERSTOCK

The partition generation
Historian Aanchal Malhotra's paternal grandparents, Bhag and Balraj Bahri Malhotra (top), and maternal grandparents, Amrit and Vishwa Nath Vij (below). All migrated after partition from what became Pakistan

Kavita Puri is a journalist, author and BBC broadcaster. A new edition of her book *Partition Voices: Untold British Stories*, marking the 75th anniversary, is out now, published by Bloomsbury

Inheritors of Partition, presented by Kavita Puri, airs on BBC Radio 4 on 8 August, and will also be available to listen to on BBC Sounds

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Enter the dragon

It's brought its own unique brand of magic to everything from *Game of Thrones* to *Harry Potter*. But how did the modern dragon come into being? **Daniel Ogden** traces the six stages of the creature's evolution in the west – from ancient serpent to medieval fire breather

AKG/ALAMY

ILLUSTRATION BY
RACHEL DICKENS

Cadmus slays the Dragon of Ares in a painting from a fourth-century BC vase. The Greeks believed that the dead dragon's teeth seeded a race of warriors

1 Slithering into infamy

Forget wings and legs, the earliest western dragons resembled massive snakes

Every small child of the modern west can describe a dragon: it is a broadly serpentine creature (colour of choice: green); it has an animalian head; between its longish neck and longish tail it has a fattish body; it has four legs; it has a pair of wings; it can be somewhat spiky.

Adults might add a further observation: that the dragon of this shape is a thing of beauty. The internet is awash with contemporary fantasy-images of the creatures, lovingly tricked out in elaborate detail.

And this points up a paradox: although the function of dragons is to be creatures of ultimate terror, we just love them. Who cares about St George and his damsel in distress? It's the dragon that makes the legend. And are the dragons not the cherries in the cakes baked by Tolkien, JK Rowling and George RR Martin?

But the universality of this dragon-shape across the west should not blind us to the fact that it is artificial, a random collection of body parts drawn from different creatures of the natural world. So where does this amalgamation come from? How did the dragon so familiar to modern fans of fantasy fiction come to be?

To answer this question we must first return to classical Greece. The word "dragon" derives, via medieval French, from the Latin *draco*, which is itself a borrowing of the ancient Greek term *drakōn*.

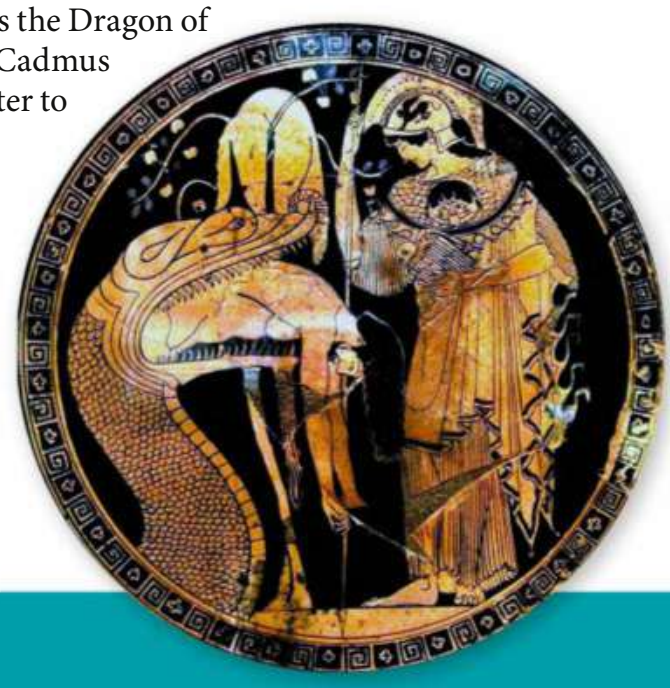
So what was a *drakōn*? Its basic form was that of a snake of enormous proportions, and it's worth remembering that this is the creature that lies at the heart of all dragons. (The convention of referring to dragons as "serpents" helps us to bear this in mind.) There was one curious exception to their pure-snake form, however: they sported beards. These seem to have been markers not of their sex but of their supernatural nature (beards being attached to males and females alike). Already, like our modern dragons, they were fiery, this being an imaginative extrapolation of the burning sensation caused by viper venom.

The teeth of a crisis

One such creature was the Dragon of Ares. When the hero Cadmus needed some pure water to make a sacrifice as he founded the city of Thebes, he sent his men to the spring of Dirce. But the spring was guarded by this terrible dragon, which destroyed them. It was now up to Cadmus to redress the situation. He took on the dragon himself and slew it – and then he hacked out the dragon's teeth and sowed them. Soon, these teeth had seeded a race of armed warriors: they were known as the Spartoi, the "Sown Men" (nothing to do with Sparta!). These provided Cadmus with his first generation of Thebans.

In a mysterious final twist, both Cadmus and his wife, Harmonia, were reputed to have been transformed into dragons at the end of their lives. Perhaps this was a divinely organised compensation for his killing of the Dragon of Ares.

We find several similarly serpentine dragons elsewhere in Greek myth: Python, the Dragon of Delphi, slain by the god Apollo; the Dragon of Colchis, guardian of the golden fleece stolen by Jason; Ladon, the Dragon of the Hesperides and the famous Hydra, slain by Heracles. She was of the same form as these other dragons, save that she was, of course, multi-headed – and multi-bearded!



The Dragon of Colchis swallows Jason, prior to being overcome by the Greek hero, as depicted on a fifth-century BC red-figure cup

ALAMY

2 The great watery foe

Why many elements of the modern dragon began life beneath the waves

In another myth from classical Greece, when the hero Perseus was flying home on his winged sandals after decapitating the Gorgon Medusa, and passed over Joppa (Jaffa), he saw a beautiful girl pinned out on a sea-cliff below. This was princess Andromeda.

Andromeda's mother, Cassiepeia, had boasted foolishly that she herself was more beautiful than the Nereids (the nymphs of the sea). In anger, they had prevailed upon Poseidon, god of the sea, to send a sea monster (*kētos*) to ravage Joppa in revenge. King Cepheus, Andromeda's father, learned from the Oracle of Ammon that the only way to bring an end to the creature's depredations was to sacrifice his daughter to it.

On learning all this, Perseus struck a quick deal with Cepheus that, if he delivered Andromeda from the sea monster, he could take her in marriage.

Perseus duly defeated the monster, either with his distinctive scythe-shaped sword, or with the super-weapon he had ready to hand, the head of Medusa, with which he was able to petrify it into a rock-formation.

The shape of this sea monster was similar to that of the sea-monster form familiar from ancient art. This was a massive, serpentine creature, but with a central body more bulbous than a snake's; it had a rather dog-like or horse-like head; it had a prominent pair of fore-flippers, which tended to mutate into clawed legs in the Roman era; it had a fish-tail; and it had spikes on its head and along the ridge of its back.

The origin of this mysterious configuration is lost in the mists of time: it may have originated in part in a gargantuan inflation of the innocent seahorse. At any rate, it can be seen at once that the creatures that have enchanted readers of *Harry Potter* and *The Hobbit* resemble more closely the classical sea monster than the snake-like classical dragon.

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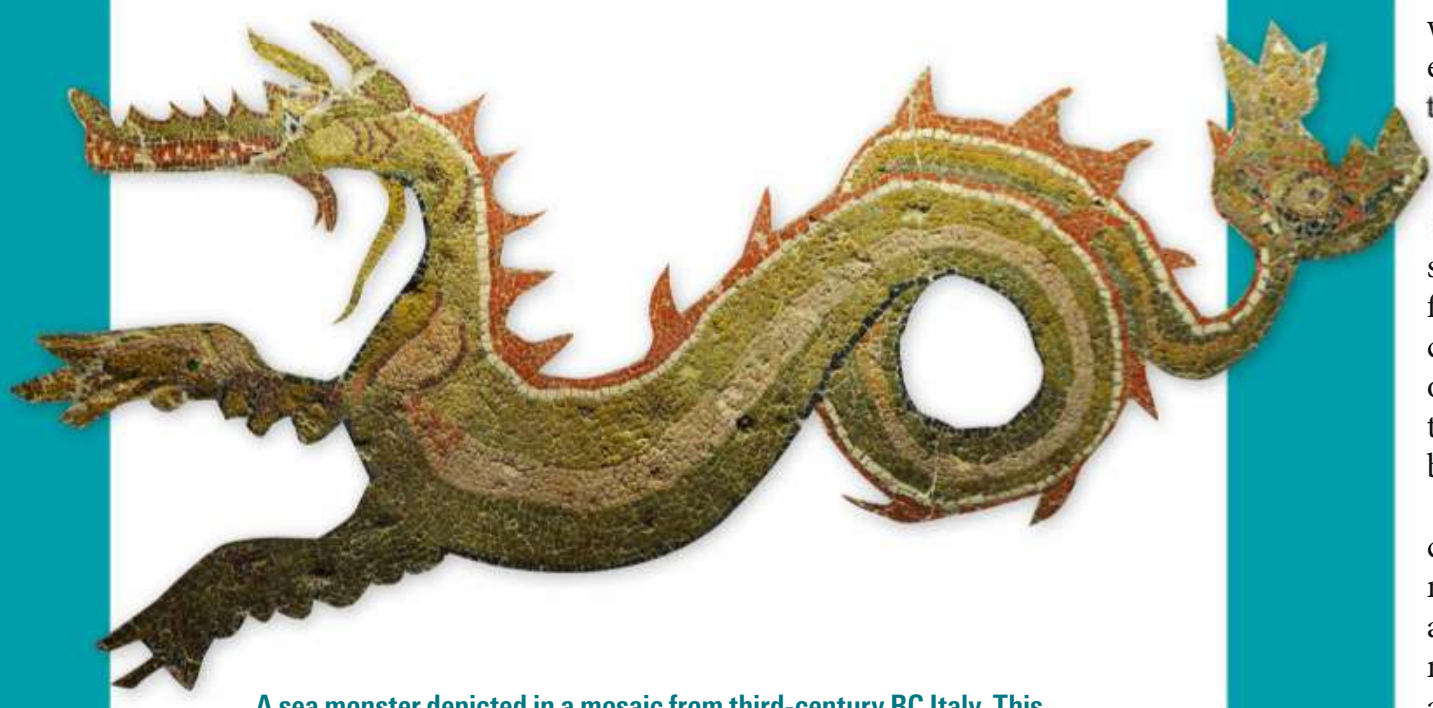


A sea monster depicted in a mosaic from third-century BC Italy. This dragon-like figure may have been inspired by the humble seahorse

3 Divine intervention

How a Christian angel becalmed a locust-spewing beast

A second-century AD Roman statue of a river divinity with an aquatic monster (left)

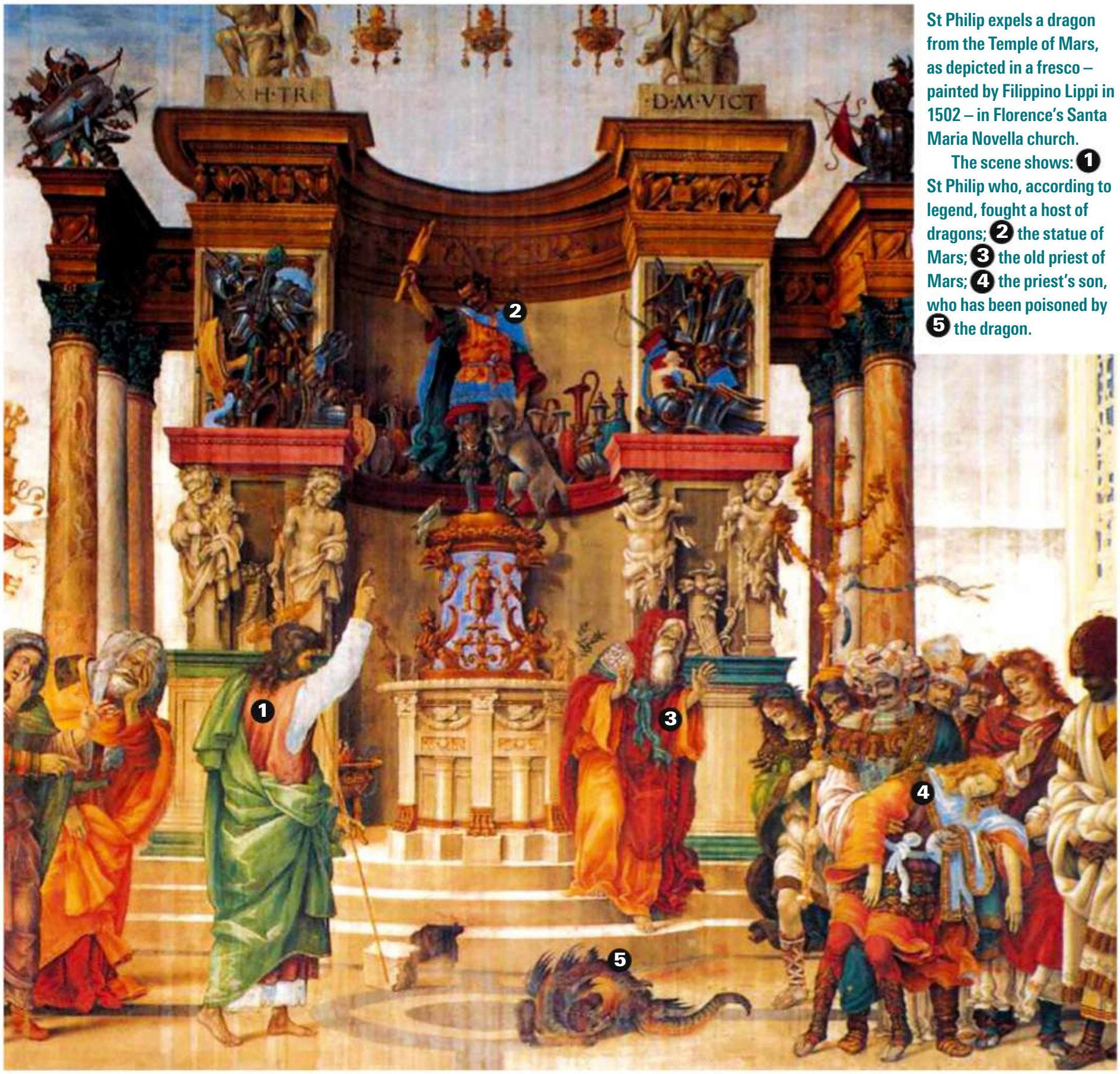
For much of the classical Greek era, the dragon and the sea monster were regarded as distinct creatures. But, by the second century AD, the two had begun to merge in the western mind.

Evidence for this is provided by the *Shepherd of Hermas*, a Christian text (composed in c130–50 AD), in which Hermas reports a number of visions he has experienced. In one, he tells that, as he was walking down the road to Campania in southern Italy, he saw a dust-cloud approach. Out of this a terrible beast charged at him with such force that it could have destroyed a city. From its mouth poured a stream of fiery locusts.

It made for a terrifying sight, but as the beast approached Hermas, it stretched itself out on the ground and let its tongue loll out. Hermas was then met by a lady in white, an embodiment of the church, who explained to him that, because of his faith, the Lord had sent the angel Thegri to bind (metaphorically) the beast's mouth.

The description of the creature makes it clear that it is a dragon, as does the surrounding imagery: the church in the form of a lady and the binding angel are clear nods to the great dragon of the Book of Revelation, which attacks the church in the form of a parturient woman and is bound by the archangel Michael.

However, Hermas does not call the creature a "dragon" (*drakōn*), but a "sea monster" (*kētos*). This merging of leviathan and land-lubbing beast explains why the modern dragon boasts an animalian head, a bulbous central body – and, of course, the spikiness of a sea monster.



St Philip expels a dragon from the Temple of Mars, as depicted in a fresco – painted by Filippino Lippi in 1502 – in Florence's Santa Maria Novella church.

The scene shows: ❶ St Philip who, according to legend, fought a host of dragons; ❷ the statue of Mars; ❸ the old priest of Mars; ❹ the priest's son, who has been poisoned by ❺ the dragon.

4 Nuns, goats and flying demons

The fourth century AD witnessed the dragon taking to the skies

In the *Acts of Philip* (written in the late fourth century), the superhero apostle takes on a dizzying array of dragons in and around Ophiorhyme ("Snake Town"). This is a pagan city identified with Hierapolis, now in Turkey, presided over by the wicked Echidna or "Viper Goddess".

Philip has a team to help him that wouldn't be out of place in a modern franchise like *Guardians of the Galaxy*. These include St Bartholomew, Mariamne the cross-dressing nun, and a leopard and a goat endowed with human speech.

In one episode Philip forces some problematic demons to come forth from the rocks beneath which they lurk. They initially manifest themselves in the form of 50 dragons, each 90 feet in length, and they are presided over by an even vaster dragon of 150 feet in length, covered in soot and belching forth fire and venom. Philip compels them to build a church for him. At his behest, they are transformed into the shape of winged humans (the familiar shape for a demon), and each flies off in this form to bring back a column for the building.

Our anonymous author leaves it unclear whether the demons' base-form is that of a dragon or that of a winged human. But it seems that for him the two entities belong fully together and are simply two faces of the same coin. So here we see a further step on the road to the development of the modern dragon: this is the source of the creature's wings.

ALAMY

5 Fire-starters, tails and missing limbs

By the end of the first millennium, the dragon's evolution was almost complete – with two notable omissions

The next stage in our supernatural journey consists not of a tale, but rather of a vignette. The *Gospels of Hincmar* is a beautifully illustrated manuscript of the later ninth century AD, now in the Bibliothèque Municipale in Reims. The book opens with the so-called Eusebian canons, lists of the parallel episodes across the four gospels, laid out in fine, architectural tables surmounted by pediments.

A range of playful serpents and dragons of different forms perch on and scamper over these pediments, but in among them are a pair of creatures of the following shape (pictured below): they have an animalian head and a bulbous body, with legs in the fore-flipper position (these courtesy of the sea monster); a pair of wings (these courtesy of humanoid, winged flying demons); and a coiling snake-tail (this, almost alone now, courtesy of the classical dragon). The pair reassure us of their fundamentally dragon nature by blowing out blasts of fire in the direction of a harmless bird perching on the apex of the pediment.

These two creatures are fully formed modern dragons. Well, almost. All they're missing are their back legs. Until then, they might be designated more particularly as "wyverns" – the technical term for a winged, two-legged dragon.

A wyvern blasts fire on a pediment in the ninth-century *Gospels of Hincmar*

BIBLIOTHÈQUE CARNEGIE DE REIMS/GETTY IMAGES

St Michael stands triumphantly over the Revelation dragon, in a c1405 painting. Not even a full complement of limbs could save this creature from the abyss

6 The last legs

In the late Middle Ages, a creature far more familiar to the modern eye finally burst forth

Between the wyvern and the more familiar form of the dragon we know today, there stands only the second pair of legs.

Examples of four-legged dragons are found in illustrated manuscripts and paintings of the saints from at least the beginning of the 12th century AD, but it is difficult to demonstrate that these are significant for the future of the creature: artists often like to freestyle with the forms of their dragons. The real four-legged revolution falls at the turn of the 15th century.

It is from c1400 that four-legged varieties come to predominate in representations of the Revelation dragon, confined to the abyss by St Michael. The same is true of images of the dragon of Lasia, slain by St George, and also of images of the dragon that swallows St Margaret of Antioch, only to have her burst forth from its belly (which permits this virgin martyr to become the patron saint of childbirth).

A good example is to be found in a fine Italian painting (shown above), now in New York's Metropolitan Museum, dated to c1405. Here the archangel Michael brandishes his sword over the supine body of the Revelation dragon: it has a coiling tail and a pair of wings, but is otherwise broadly crocodilian in configuration, not least in its four stumpy legs.

And it is those legs that propelled the dragon along the final steps of its journey – via flightless serpent, spiky sea monster and flying fire-breather – to the creature we know and love today. H

A four-legged dragon depicted in a Persian scientific book

Daniel Ogden is professor of ancient history at the University of Exeter. His latest book, *The Dragon in the West* (2021), is available now from OUP

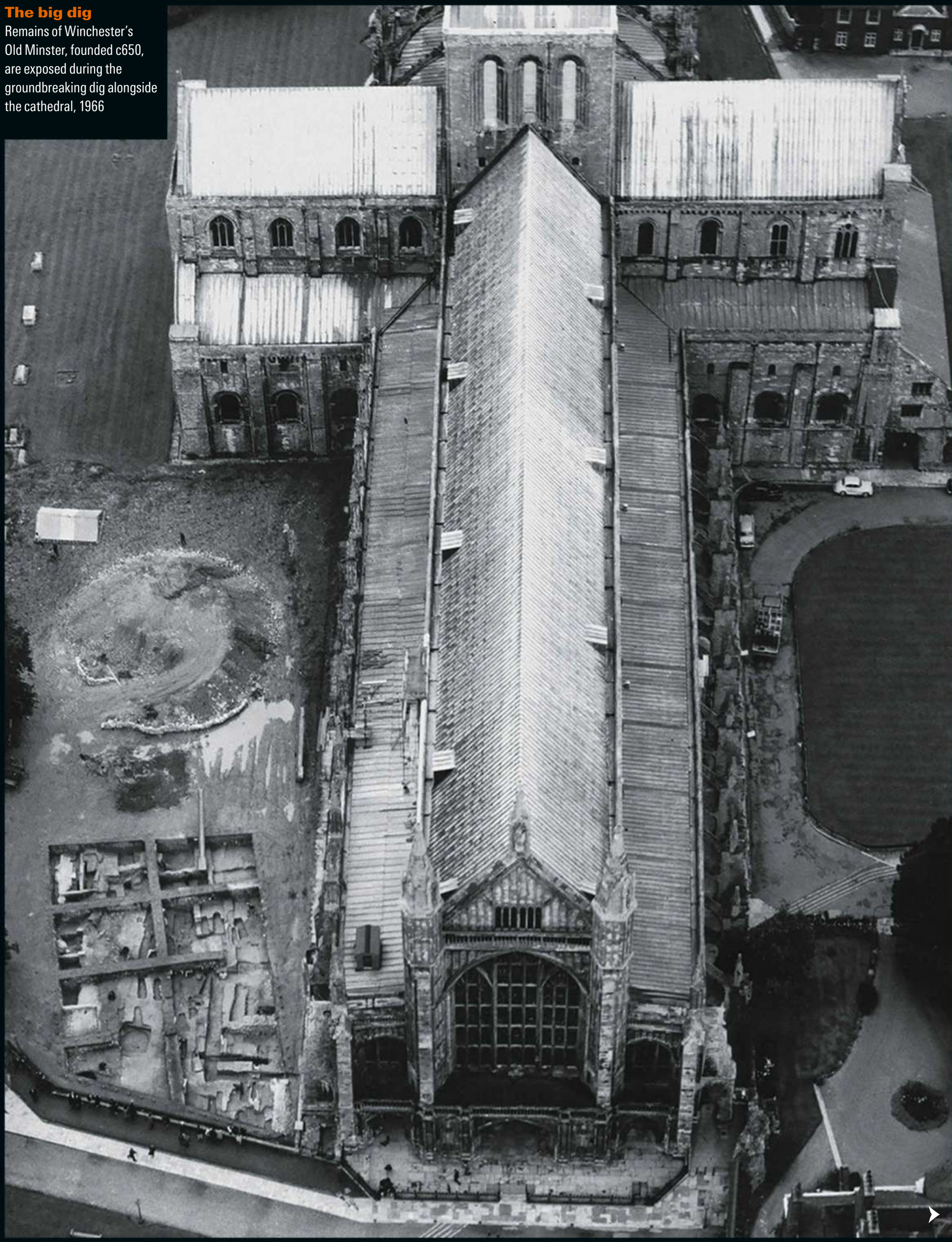
THE DIG THAT CHANGED (URBAN) HISTORY

Sixty years ago, one of Britain's most important archaeology projects was launched in Hampshire. **Michael Wood** reviews the groundbreaking discoveries of the dig at Winchester, once the showpiece of Alfred the Great's royal dynasty

On 27 February 1962, hundreds of people crammed into Winchester Guildhall for a public meeting. It was, in many ways, not such an unusual event: the foundation of a local committee, in this case the Winchester Excavations Committee. The meeting was, though, to have profound impacts, because it signalled, as *The Times* later said, the start of "one of the most important excavations worldwide of the 20th century" – nothing less than the beginnings of urban archaeology in Britain, and the recovery of a key to the pre-Conquest English past.

It had all begun – as some of the best archaeological stories do – with a rescue dig under a car park. At the turn of the 1960s, Trust Houses had announced plans to build a new hotel in the middle of Winchester, between High Street and the cathedral. Documentary evidence, brought together by the late Roger Quirk, indicated that this site was close to the location of the famous seventh-century Old Minster, and also of the New Minster founded by Edward the Elder to

The big dig
Remains of Winchester's Old Minster, founded c650, are exposed during the groundbreaking dig alongside the cathedral, 1966



@WINCHESTER EXCAVATIONS COMMITTEE

be a burial place for his father, Alfred the Great, and his dynasty. So the new development threatened the historic core of Winchester (*Felix Urbs Wintonia*: "the Fortunate City of Winchester"), England's first "capital" and the principal seat of the Anglo-Saxon kings of Wessex.

A test dig in 1961 revealed 3 metres of undisturbed strata of material going back to the Roman era, spanning the entire Old English period – and there were signs of major buildings.

"It was thought that the development was likely to be on the site of New Minster," recalls Martin Biddle, who directed the Winchester excavations. "At that time there was no legal protection of any kind for the buried remains of the urban past – indeed, for any past except listed buildings." Fortunately, he found allies on the city council, including the mayor, Dilys Neate, and in 1962 the Winchester Excavations Committee was established. It was a landmark moment in the unearthing of the city's history.

International effort

Nine more years of intensive excavation followed, the dig rapidly evolving from a rescue operation to a well-planned long-term campaign. The work was backed by two American universities, the Ministry of Works (as it then was), the Winchester and Hampshire Councils, the British Museum and the Society of Antiquaries – a fantastic combined effort that sustained the dig's finances over so many years. In all, some 3,000 volunteers from more than 30 countries worked on the project, which won a United Nations award for international cooperation.

The dig captured the public imagination, spanning as it finally did some 2,000 years of history – from the Iron Age through the Roman-era town of Venta Belgarum, Anglo-Saxon Wintanceaster and Alfred the Great's capital, to the Norman conquest and beyond. It was the most comprehensive excavation ever undertaken of an early English city.

For all Old English history fans, as well as for scholars, the findings were thrilling. By chance, barely a month into the first season on Cathedral Green, the team discovered the base of the high altar of the Old Minster, founded around 650. They then exposed the foundations, enabling them to reconstruct a complete plan of the Old Minster, burial place of most of the early West Saxon kings. Subsequently they discovered the 10th-century New Minster and clues to the site of the royal palace, along with many other features: inscriptions, sculpture, metalwork, even fragments of wall paintings from the days of Alfred's battles with the Danes. In a very real sense, this was the root of the English monar-

Royal city Edgar, king of the English, depicted in an illustration from the New Minster Charter produced in the 960s on the orders of Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester. Evidence from the pivotal Winchester project showed that people from across England and even western Europe flocked to the city during his reign

Old meets new An artist's impression of the Old Minster of Winchester – burial place of most of the early West Saxon kings – with the 10th-century New Minster in the background. The sites of both were discovered during nine years of excavations

ILLUSTRATION BY SIMON HAYFIELD © WINCHESTER EXCAVATIONS COMMITTEE/ALAMY

The dig spanned some 2,000 years of history, from the Iron Age, the Romans and the Anglo-Saxons to the Norman conquest and beyond

chy – after all, the current Queen traces her descent back to Alfred and his ancestors.

I can remember the excitement I felt as a student when I bought the interim reports each year; I've still got the dog-eared copies over which we pored, as if a whole new category of knowledge was appearing before our eyes.

Among the eye-opening discoveries was the fact that a completely new street grid had been replanned inside the Roman walls as part of the massive reorganisation of southern English towns at around the time of Alfred the Great. Now we saw for the first time what these "kings of the Anglo-Saxons", as they called themselves, were actually doing in the late ninth and 10th centuries.

Previously, our understanding of urban history in this period had been limited to enigmatic documents such as the Burghal Hidage. This assessment list, dating from c914 AD, details more than 30 towns and forts, some of them reused Roman circuits and Iron Age forts, others newly built at that time. Thanks to the Winchester excavations, though, we could now clearly see the pattern of later Anglo-Saxon urban development. In fact, the discovery of the Winchester street plan even led to a reassessment of the London street plan of the ninth and tenth centuries.

Centre of gravity

Winchester was the showpiece for the dynasty. By the end of the 10th century, England's economic centre of gravity had shifted to London, but at the time of the Norman conquest Winchester was still the royal city. The project looked at the new Norman city, with its castles and cathedral – still today the longest nave in Britain – and charted, too, the medieval decline and the later emergence of the early modern city in the Georgian period. Never before had such a programme been undertaken and carried through in any city in Britain or mainland Europe. Not surprisingly, there is hope that Winchester will eventually be graced by a museum celebrating England's first "capital".

The dig, completed in 1971, was followed from the mid-seventies by an ongoing series of *Winchester Studies* publications; 10 are already available, with seven more still to come. These lavish volumes, fabulously printed and illustrated, are now being digitised, with previously published volumes to be made freely available (for more details, see *winchesterstudies.org.uk/publications*). Set alongside the archaeology, they provide an incredible range of literary, poetic, historical and documentary evidence for the city's story.

One aspect they highlight is that England was part of the growth of urban medieval Europe between the 10th and 12th centuries. During that period, perhaps 15 per cent of the population lived in towns and cities. Winchester housed a substantial concentration of people in an estimated 1,300 tenements, with perhaps as many as 13,000 inhabitants at its peak in the 12th century.

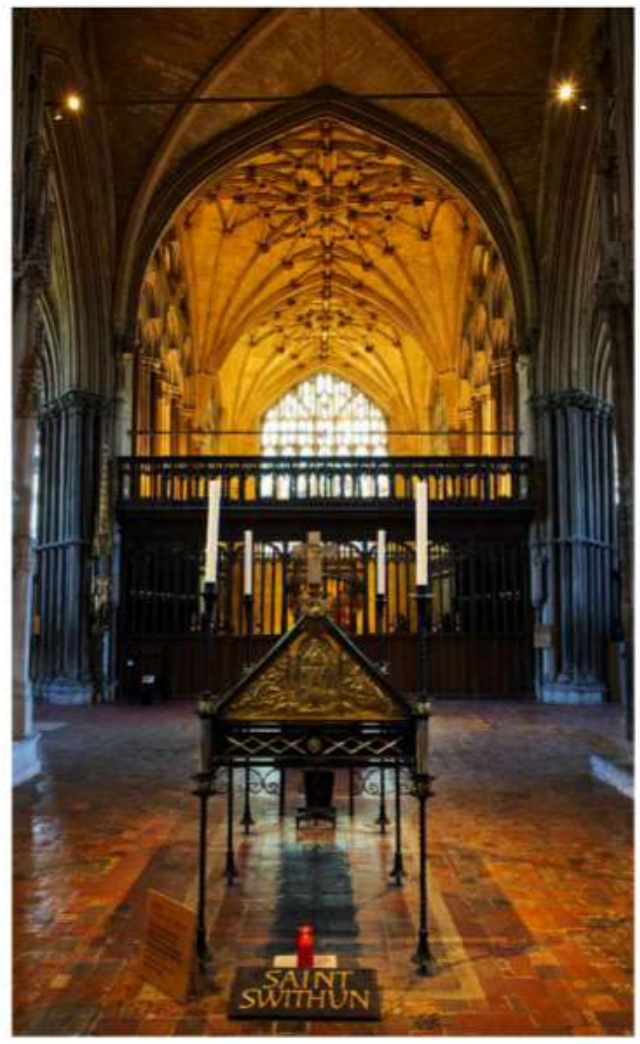
With a population of about 20,000, London was England's biggest city. Though small by later standards, it was thronged with merchants from all over northern Europe; one of the law codes of King Æthelred, dated to around AD 1000, singles out those of Rouen, Flanders, Ponthieu, Normandy and Frankia, as well as others from specific towns in the Low Countries and "the men of the emperor" (Ottonian Germany), who had especially wide-ranging privileges. Other tolls reveal that goods brought to London included timber, fish and wine from France.

Winchester, the dig showed, shared in this growth. The work also revealed the beginnings of civil society in England. In the 10th century, there was more money, more mobility and – despite the impression given by the harsh laws of Edgar (king of the English 959–75) – more freedom. This information comes especially from hitherto unexamined sources published in the *Winchester Studies* series.

For example, a text describing manifestations of popular piety at the shrine of Saint Swithun in Winchester between 969 and 971 gives us the records of a popular cult just as it took off. Along with stories of miracle cures at the shrine – people recovering their sight or throwing away their crutches – these accounts are invaluable for the incidental details they reveal about the lower reaches of society as well as the middle classes. They show that in Edgar's time it was possible for people to travel across England to buy and sell, to go on pilgrimage or, if free, to seek work. People came to Winchester from London, East Anglia and Essex, Somerset, Northumbria and France. Even an English resident in Rome was lured home by stories

Historic partnership
Martin Biddle, director of the Winchester dig, pictured with archaeologist Birthe Kjølbye – later his wife

King's head
A penny issued by Alfred the Great, c880. At around this time, street plans of English towns including Winchester were radically reorganised



Pilgrim magnet
A memorial shrine to St Swithun in Winchester Cathedral

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Place of worship A late first to mid-fourth-century Romano-Celtic temple found in 1971 at Lower Brook Street, Winchester. The wooden statuette of a woman (inset) is from a nearby third-century pit

of life-changing cures at the revamped shrine of Saint Swithun.

The people who congregated in this rich West Saxon city, with its royal churches and markets, represent a cross section of wider 10th-century English society: blind beggars, merchants and moneyers, bell-founders and even a "skilled physician". There were many foreigners, too; indeed, Edgar was criticised for inviting too many immigrants. It was not only in London that Flemish and Frankish merchants congregated; here in Winchester, a wealthy moneyer called Flodoald (a name from Normandy or Picardy) and his brother lived in the city, perhaps with his whole family. This is the kind of merchant implied in Æthelred's laws, which regulated wine imports from that part of France. The Anglo-Saxon world was changing.

Consequences of conquest

The Norman conquest initially struck a huge blow to this rich and diverse urban milieu. In Winchester, the area taken to make space for construction of the new Norman castle (including its ditches inside and outside the city wall) totalled nearly 4.5 hectares. Thanks to the work of the Winchester Excavations team, our knowledge of the post-Conquest city's citizens now grows exponentially. For example, the first volume of the *Winchester Studies* examines the "Winton Domesday" (c1110). This house-by-house survey of the city shows where people lived and what jobs they did – staggering detail for a medieval population, encompassing people ranging from slaves and servants to merchants, priests and nobles. This enables us to link the

Astonishingly, it's possible to place medieval Winchester's inhabitants in their very houses and shops along the street

lives of the real people in the survey with what the archaeologists find in the ground – sometimes down to the very house.

Thus on the north side of High Street, going towards the West Gate, the survey records properties as they had been in 1066. We find Edwin "Good-soul" in the second property, Leofwine the shoemaker in the sixth house, Wulfric the priest in the 10th tenement. Nearby was "the guild hall of the *cnihtas* [the knights or thegns]", where they used to "drink their guild" – that is, hold their feasts – "held freely from King Edward [the Confessor]". Further on were Ælfwin the moneyer and Leofflaed, daughter of Ecregal. There were shopkeepers, a herring-monger, priests and beadles – all members of the old community of England on the eve of the Conquest. Astonishingly, it's possible to place the city's inhabitants in their very houses and shops along the street. No other town in Britain has ever had this treatment – and maybe no other ever will.

The Winchester Excavations Committee continues to prepare its publications, and is now raising money to fund the production of the remaining volumes as well as digitising the entire output. This charity, with small teams based in Winchester and Oxford, is still led by the ever-dynamic Martin Biddle.

Our most famous living archaeologist, Biddle turned 85 this June; he was not yet 25 when the Winchester Excavations Committee was founded in 1962. At the age of 12, he dug for eminent archaeologist Mortimer Wheeler at Verulamium (the Roman town just outside modern St Albans); at just 20 he excavated at Jericho for Kathleen Kenyon, another hugely renowned archaeologist. His later projects include amazing detective work on the reputed burial place of Jesus in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. In the 1970s and 80s, he turned his attention to Repton in Derbyshire, with its incredible mass burial of Viking dead. He solved the riddle of the origin of "King Arthur's Round Table" in Winchester, dating it to the late 13th century, and addressed many other conundrums. Not least of these efforts was his brilliant untangling of late Roman St Albans, proving continuity from the Roman period to the Anglo-Saxons. No one in our lifetime has done more to expand our knowledge of Britain's early history.

But Winchester is still his baby. It took 10 years to dig and another 50 to publish the results – and the work is still ongoing. No other excavation has contributed more to our understanding of the urban past in Britain, bringing a lost world back to life. So we should celebrate Martin for a career of incredible exploration throughout which his drive, his expertise and his curiosity have never flagged.

"I was lucky enough to be there at the start," he says – never imagining, perhaps, that from those small beginnings in the car park by the cathedral would emerge one of the greatest urban archaeology projects in the world. H

Michael Wood is professor of public history at the University of Manchester. His latest book is a new edition of *In Search of the Dark Ages* (BBC, 2022)

Discover more at a new exhibition, **The Great Winchester Dig: How it Changed Archaeology and Our Continuing Journey**, at Hampshire Record Office, running until 29 September

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“For too long **medieval women** have been written out of history. It’s high time we put them back in”

Janina Ramirez introduces three trailblazers whose stories show that medieval women were far more than the wives, sisters and aunts of men

A c13th-century depiction of Hildegard of Bingen in front of *The Choir of Angels* (c1175), a drawing of one of her religious visions. Hildegard was, says Janina Ramirez, “an extraordinary polymath who inspired a cultural renaissance”

GETTY IMAGES/AKG

1 The religious pioneer

The Yorkshire soil has offered up tantalising glimpses of a "princess" who straddled England's pagan and Christian ages

A few beads and pendants was all they found. It wasn't much to go on, but these diminutive treasures nestled in the soil threw up some tantalising clues about an influential woman who died in the seventh century.

That woman lived during a period of huge cultural change in England. Known as the Loftus Princess, her burial alongside a series of remarkable treasures, overlooking the cliffs of North Yorkshire, testifies that she was honoured by the people who placed her in the earth. The rest of her story – what she achieved, how she lived, who she encountered – can only be surmised.

Should we stop asking questions and dismiss the Loftus Princess as yet another lost woman from our medieval past? Or can we put her in context and build up a world around her using a range of evidence and approaches at our disposal?

For all too long, the former option has prevailed. There's not enough room on these pages to list the medieval women who have been deliberately removed from the records. So let's cite just one: Æthelflaed, the Lady of the Mercians, a military leader, social reformer, patron of the arts and a diplomat whose contributions to ninth and early tenth-century English politics were substantially downplayed by her brother, King Edward the Elder.

> The Loftus Princess was lain in a bed, which seems to have been an honour reserved for a handful of prominent women

The likes of Edward sought to portray women as little more than wives, sisters and aunts of kings. Yet they were also warriors, artists, authors, scientists, leaders, explorers, entrepreneurs and so much more. They were multifaceted, complex and fascinating figures, who are deserving of our recognition. And now let's return to the Loftus Princess.

An active afterlife

That we know that the Loftus Princess existed at all is down to archaeologist Steve Sherlock and his team, who in 2006 discovered an early medieval burial site cut into an ancient landscape near the town of Loftus. Among Iron Age barrows and Roman remains were 109 graves dating from the seventh century. Acidic soil has claimed the bones, but at this point in English history the belief in Germanic gods and an active afterlife in Valhalla meant that individuals were placed in the grave with things they might need – weapons, jewellery and more. These grave goods allowed the team to build a picture of who was interred here and when.

The site was clearly arranged with a focal point. There are entry and exit points which suggest people processed towards and past the main mound in the centre. That mound is where the Loftus Princess was buried. Post holes show that two small wooden buildings had stood near her grave, one possibly serving as a chapel.

The site is complicated: on the one hand the burials contain finds, which means they are part of centuries of pagan practices. On the other, all the graves point from east to west, which was common to Christian burials. Steve and the team conclude that this is a site where new ideas from the continent were beginning to reveal themselves in the way people buried their dead.

This certainly seems to have been the case with the Loftus Princess, who was lain with great ceremony in a bed. The iron cleats are all that survive, but burial in a bed seems to have been an honour reserved for a handful of prominent women at the moment Christianity was putting down roots in England.

Her jewellery tells a similar story. A gold and garnet cloisonné replicates pieces from Sutton Hoo and the Staffordshire Hoard. The gems have been reused from an older piece.

But the central stone (shown left) is one of a kind. A large garnet cut in the shape of a shell, it suggests that the woman wearing it was tying herself to the new religion that was making an impact in England around the arrival of St Augustine in AD 597. The shell is a Christian symbol connected to martyrdom and resurrection, later associated with St James and pilgrimage.

The Loftus Princess was living at a time when many women were choosing to engage with the ideological changes being introduced through the Christian church. These included Hild, who founded a double-monastery at Whitby, and Bertha, who brought literacy and church buildings to Canterbury. Christianity allowed English women power of a kind they had not had access to before.

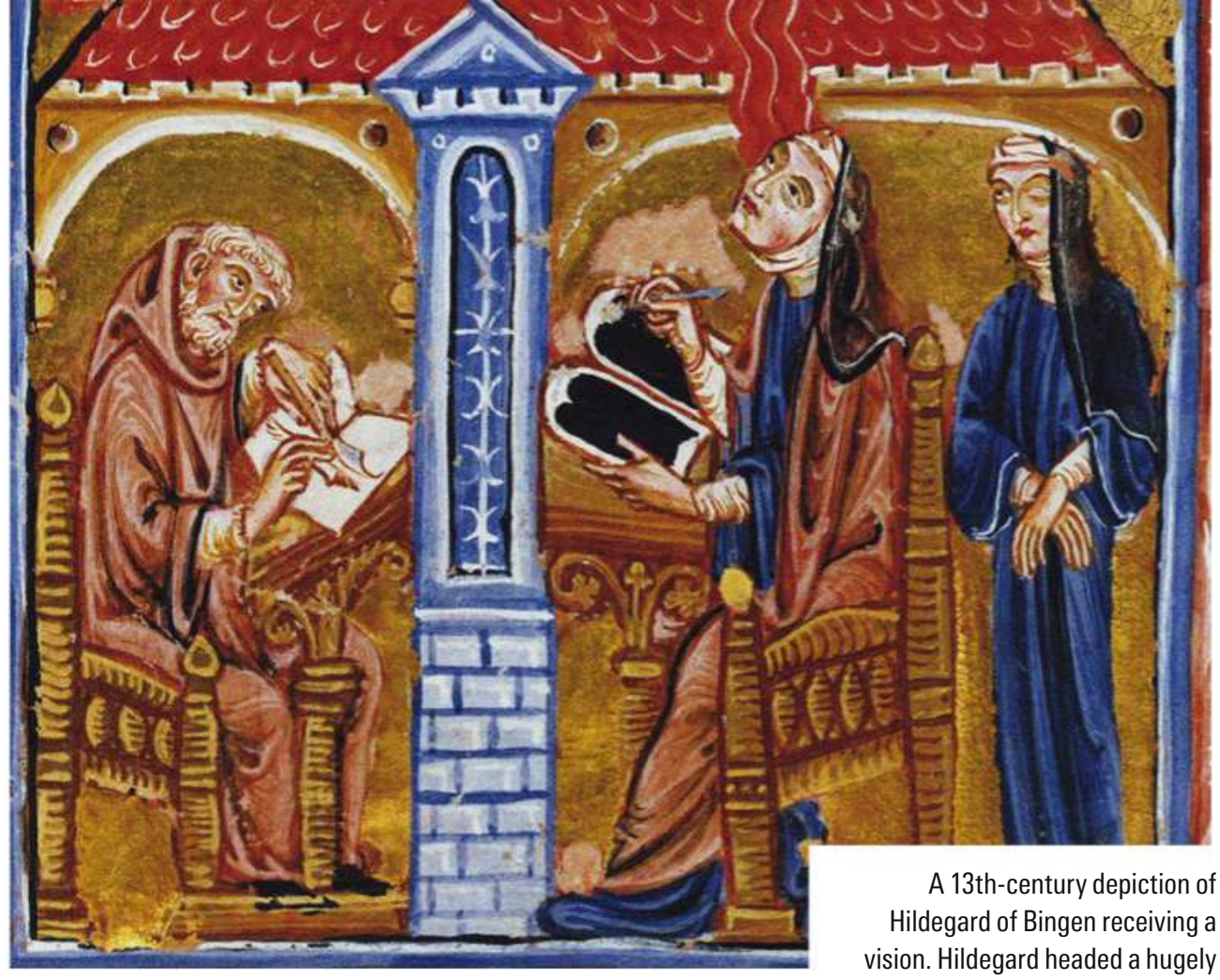
St Hilda offers the gospels to St Walpurga. Like the Loftus Princess, Hilda's life coincided with the rise of Christianity in England

The pendants and beads buried with the Loftus Princess. The pendant's shell was a Christian symbol of resurrection and pilgrimage

GETTY IMAGES/ AKG/REDCAR AND CLEVELAND COUNCIL

2 The ultimate renaissance woman

How Hildegard of Bingen turned the Rhineland into a cultural powerhouse



A 13th-century depiction of Hildegard of Bingen receiving a vision. Hildegard headed a hugely influential community of nuns

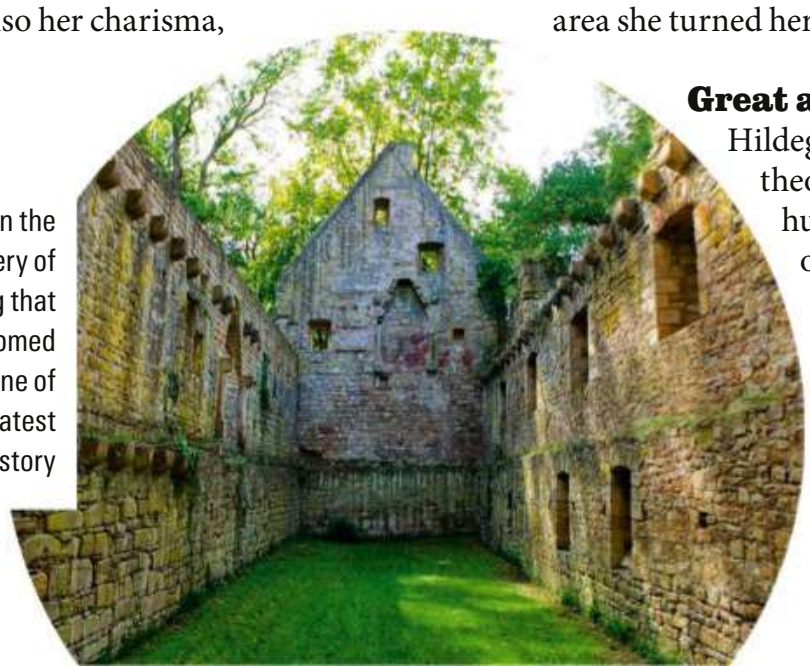
It's often assumed that medieval women were denied education from childhood and kept from the resources they would need to match their male counterparts. Yet the achievements of Hildegard of Bingen – a writer, composer, philosopher, mystic and visionary who inspired a cultural renaissance from her Rhineland home in the 12th century – have long challenged that assumption.

High on a hilltop in a remote part of the German countryside, the abandoned medieval monastery of Disibodenberg is where we come closest to Hildegard of Bingen. In these evocative ruins 900 years ago she quietly and patiently grew her knowledge and range of talents to become one of the medieval world's great polymaths.

Medieval monasteries were distinctly gendered sites. At Disibodenberg, the monks dominated the buildings, from the church to the refectory. But on the northern edge was another small community who were separated out, yet able to benefit from this rich cultural environment – a group of young nuns. It was here, in a cell attached to a tiny church, that Hildegard came as a child and lived enclosed until she was in her forties. But when her mentor and abbess, Jutta, died in 1136 Hildegard came into her own. Fortunately, she would live a long life to the age of 81 and it was this longevity that has helped sear her name onto the pages of history.

But it was also her charisma, passion and intelligence that got Hildegard recognised as the Sibyl of the Rhine and advisor to popes and emperors. Even today it is remarkable for an author to have their collected works compiled in one volume. But that is what has survived in the *Riesencodex*, which was written around the time of her death. Nearly lost after the Second World War and only rescued due to the daring exploits of two women (Margarete Kühn and Caroline Walsh, who stole the Risencodex from postwar Soviet authorities and took it back to the nuns at Eibingen), this enormous manuscript shows the full scale of Hildegard's achievements. She excelled in every area she turned her hand to.

> Thanks to her charisma, passion and intelligence, Hildegard became an advisor to popes and emperors



It was in the monastery of Disibodenberg that Hildegard blossomed into one of the greatest polymaths in history

ALAMY/BRIDGEMAN

Great and good

Hildegard wrote theological texts of huge mystical originality, based on the visions she had experienced since childhood. Her letters to the good and the great of the medieval world display her ability to influence the politics and opinions of her time at the highest level. Yet the intimacy of her personal correspondence with her adoring followers shows she could connect passionately with people on a human level. "Your divine absence has made me drunk on the wine of sorrow," wrote one such follower, a nun called Gertrud, lamenting the fact that she was yet to meet Hildegard in person.

Hildegard's scientific works, which range from natural history to the first description of a female orgasm, are based on decades of working in hospitals and tending to the particular needs of women. Her artistic abilities were showcased in the psychedelic illuminations of her texts, while her contributions to music were extraordinary. Unlike other composers of her time, Hildegard's songs and style of singing leap across octaves in an attempt to capture the celestial through sound. She even invented her own language.

The female-centric world she built, particularly in the spiritual realm, showed the church as a nurturing mother and Love and Wisdom symbolically as women. But in the temporal realm, too, she ruled a powerful community of influential nuns at her convent in Bingen. Here art, music and education empowered the women around her to become ever more ambitious and play increasingly important roles in 12th-century Europe.

Was Hildegard better than Leonardo?
Janina Ramirez discusses Hildegard on our podcast at:
historyextra.com/hildegard-bingen

3 Poland's female king

The suffering saint who always put her nation first

Today many think of Poland as "eastern Europe", the edge of the western world. But in the late medieval period it was the very centre of the continent and the heart of power. Towards the end of the 14th century, a mega-state had emerged which spread from the Baltic Sea to the Mediterranean and was governed by Louis I of Hungary. He was linked to the Capetian monarchy, so familial ties with the rulers of France, England, Germany and Italy were tightly woven. This was a world bound at the level of nobility by courtly love and chivalry, yet torn apart internally by warfare and political power play. The empire that Louis had built stood on shifting sands.

His position was all the more fragile since he had three daughters to succeed him and no male heirs. While they were still toddlers he had the girls tied in marriage agreements to the most important rulers of Europe and signed a treaty known as the Privilege of Koszyce, which would ensure his daughters were recognised as kings, not queens, of Poland and Hungary after his death. His youngest child, Jadwiga, was sent to the court of Austria at just five years old and bound in front of the European elite in a "provisional marriage" to eight-year-old prince William. She stayed in Austria where she was immersed in culture, received the finest education and mastered a range of languages. She was getting ready to rule.

> Jadwiga tried to chop down the door to her chamber with an axe, but ultimately she saw her mission was bigger than her love

Arranged marriage

Jadwiga's time came all too soon. First her oldest sister died, followed by her father in 1382. Her mother pulled many of the strings, having her sister Mary declared King of Hungary, with their joint power base in Buda.

But this left the issue of who would rule Poland. The political governance of the country lay in the hands of the nobility, and they would only recognise an individual as "king" if they resided in the country and married a partner of their choosing. So, at 10 years old, Jadwiga was removed from her family and placed in the hands of powerful men in Kraków.

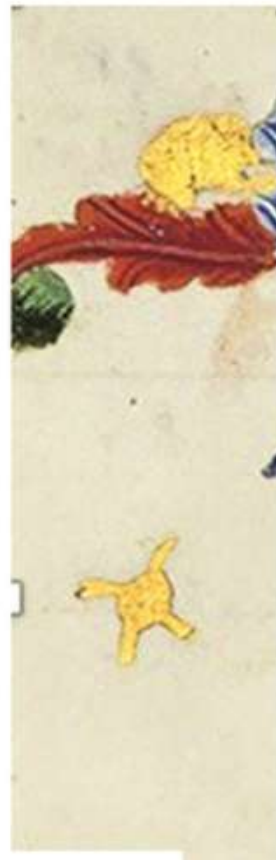
While Jadwiga was effectively married to William of Austria, the nobles saw an opportunity to break away from Hungary and tie Poland to the powerful ally to their east: Lithuania. The only issue was that it was ruled by a pagan warrior king who was already in his thirties. Jagiello ruled the last part of Europe not to have converted to Christianity and, in return for marrying Jadwiga, he had to be baptised and spread the new religion through his uber kingdom.

What follows next would make Jadwiga a Polish hero. William raced to Kraków to rescue his young love and Jadwiga tried to chop down the door to her chamber with an axe – but ultimately she saw her mission was bigger than her love. She must sacrifice her own concerns to those of her religion and her nation and marry Jagiello. This fantastical story is based on primary sources, but centuries of Poles have elaborated on it. Jadwiga was a suffering saint, eulogised to the point of perfection and declared a rallying point for Polish independence.

Yet a different side to the story unfolds when she is considered alongside the objects she owned. Jadwiga was incredibly complex. The alms purse, Italian crucifix and ivory box she is connected to all reveal a worldly woman with one foot in the chivalric tradition and another in the cut and thrust of international warfare and politics.

The Florian Psalter (shown below) is perhaps the closest we can get to this woman who changed the course of history. Thought to have been made for Jadwiga, the manuscript contains the Psalms written in three different languages and is decorated with scientific symbols and astrological references. There are even images of figures resembling Gandalf and Yoda. Fun and intellectually stimulating, when we look at this

Queen Jadwiga, shown on a Polish coin from the 1930s, has long been hailed as a rallying point of Polish independence



The Florian Psalter, which may have been created for Jadwiga, contains the Psalms in three languages and fantastical figures including ones resembling Yoda (top) and Gandalf (right)

GETTY IMAGES

book we peer over Jadwiga's shoulder. She was pious and saintly, but also a player on a world stage. She led armies in defence of her sister, conducted diplomatic negotiations with the powerful Teutonic Knights and tried to maintain a degree of peaceful interaction with her often hostile neighbours.

Jadwiga also founded the first university in Poland, but died aged 25, shortly after giving birth to a daughter. So her foundation is still named after her husband – Jagiellonian University – despite the fact he had little to do with it.

Like so many women in the Middle Ages, Jadwiga has been overwritten and misrepresented. It is time to return to the evidence and look again at how history has been written for us. Let's put the women back in. Together we can look at history with fresh eyes, find new stories and look to the past for ways to move towards a more equal and inclusive future. H

Janina Ramirez is a cultural historian, broadcaster and author based at the University of Oxford. Her latest book, *Femina: A New History of the Middle Ages, Through the Women Written Out of It*, was published by WH Allen in July

Melvyn Bragg and guests discussed **Hildegard of Bingen** on an episode of BBC Radio 4's *In Our Time: bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b047c312*

WAWEL CATHEDRAL/BIBLIOTEKA NARODOWA

This French alms purse, now in Wawel Cathedral in Kraków, is thought to have been brought to Poland by Jadwiga. It probably depicts scenes from the chivalric romance of Tristan and Isolde

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INTERVIEW / LEANDA DE LISLE

"Henrietta Maria has been looked at far too much through the male gaze – it's time for another perspective"

LEANDA DE LISLE speaks to Emily Briffett about her new study of Charles I's reviled queen – and reveals why she doesn't deserve her rotten reputation

Emily Briffett: Your new book tells the fascinating story of Henrietta Maria, challenging the myths surrounding her life. To begin with, can you please introduce her to us?
Leanda de Lisle: Henrietta Maria was a Bourbon princess. She was the daughter of King Henry IV ("the Great"), a warrior king assassinated by a Catholic fanatic when she was just a baby. Her mother, Marie de Medici, ruled France as regent for many years. At the age of 15, Henrietta Maria married Charles I of England, Scotland and Ireland, later becoming the mother of Charles II and James II.

An important aspect of Henrietta Maria to address is her legacy. How has the Stuart queen been seen through history?
She is probably the most reviled consort to have ever worn the crown of the three kingdoms, but she was ultimately a victim of parliamentary propaganda of the period. In her lifetime she was described as the "popish brat of France" and a whore, and was said to have worn the britches in her marriage. Ever since, she's been perceived as the original "bad woman": Eve, the corrupter who seduced her husband into evil.

How did she come to be so hated?
As the old adage goes, history is written by the victors – those who overthrew the house of Stuart in 1688. A myth then grew up that English Protestantism played a pivotal role in the creation of our democracy, and indeed our sense of nationhood. Therefore, being a Catholic, Henrietta Maria was associated with Charles's authoritarianism and is wrongly assumed to have been, in part, responsible for it.

Henrietta Maria: Conspirator, Warrior, Phoenix Queen
by Leanda de Lisle
(Vintage, 496 pages, £25)

Beyond this, I actually think her legacy shaped that of Charles I. To ensure that she is believable in the role of the seductress corrupting him into evil, Charles has to be perceived as weak and feeble. So, though it's true that he was a sickly child, we often don't hear that he was actually extremely athletic and physically strong in adulthood.

How much do we actually know about Henrietta Maria's character?
One of the fascinating things about studying the 17th century is that a myriad of sources exist from different people and places, which provide us with a more well-rounded picture of a person's life than might be possible in previous centuries. In comparison to some English sources, the French saw Henrietta Maria far more positively: as her father's daughter, as incredibly brave and as a martyr for her faith through her suffering in support of her husband. They describe a remarkable woman, who was respected for her political and diplomatic acumen.

We can also get a sense of her personality from her own letters. She wrote many letters – especially during the Civil War – and in them she comes across as someone who was very affectionate and passionate.

Something I particularly like about her is that she seems to have been funny and really quite naughty – she liked to make light of grim situations. One time, on her way back from Holland to England, horrendous storms plagued her fleet, sinking two of her ships. Fearing that they might die, some of her ladies openly confessed their sins out loud. When they made it to shore, Henrietta Maria then teased them about their secrets. She often made jokes about herself as well – even when she was in some horrendous situations.

What type of society was Henrietta Maria born into?
Henrietta Maria was born into the fun and feminine French court, where women could speak on stage, advertising a female perspective in a way they did not in the English court. As I mentioned at the start, her mother was also the regent of France for much of her childhood. This must have provided her with a very particular perspective on what was possible for women, and given her a sense that women could, and should, have a voice.

It's also important to remember that her father introduced the Edict of Nantes in 1598 (later confirmed by her mother and brother), which gave Protestants religious rights in France. So she came from a society where you could be a Catholic and practise your faith, and you could also be a Protestant and practise your faith – which was very, very different from England. Her father also firmly believed in forming alliances with Protestant powers against their great rivals, the Catholic Habsburgs. When she married Charles, I think she saw it very much in this tradition.

Would you say that this upbringing encouraged her to be tolerant of other faiths?
I'd say so. There's a great story about when Henrietta Maria first arrived in England in 1625, and she was asked: "Can you stand the Huguenots [French Protestants]?" She replied, "Was not my father one?", because her father had been a Protestant in his youth and later converted to Catholicism.

Her doctor, who was in charge of caring for her life, was a Protestant. Later on, her dearest and closest friends were not only Protestants, but the leaders of the Puritan-inclined faction at court, who

PROFILE

Leanda de Lisle is a bestselling author of historical books including *White King: The Tragedy of Charles I* (Chatto & Windus, 2018) and *Tudor: The Family Story* (Chatto & Windus, 2013). She has also written for publications including *The Times*, *The Guardian* and *The Spectator*.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAMIEN MCFADDEN

shared similar views in terms of aggression towards the Habsburgs.

So yes, I'd say she took a rather tolerant view in that respect. I think she hoped she would be able to encourage her husband to offer persecuted British Catholics something similar to the Edict of Nantes.

What was Henrietta Maria's own religious life like, both publicly and privately?

Henrietta Maria was of course a committed Catholic, and her public standpoint was that she needed to openly protect persecuted British Catholics and set an example to them, as well as to potential converts. She was careful to ensure she attended Catholic mass wherever she was, even though English Catholics were not permitted to attend mass. She was even permitted to build a chapel at Somerset House, which displayed the baroque Mass in all its spiritual power and beauty.

In terms of her private religious standpoint, we know that she read plenty of spiritual books about the life of Christ. While she was very aware that she was a queen, the daughter and wife of kings and the mother of a future king, she also recognised that she was a human being, like other human beings, so wanted to consider the suffering Christ endured and pursue an inner Christian humility.

However, there's another interesting side to Henrietta Maria's private faith which came from her mother. Because Eve tempted Adam in the Garden of Eden in the Christian faith, women were perceived as flawed, weak and corrupting. What Henrietta Maria's mother reminded her was that Mary, the virgin mother of Christ and the "new Eve", had the ear of Christ and was able to guide him. So the Virgin Mary and everything she represented as a woman, mother and partner became very important to Henrietta Maria.

How much truth is there in the accusation that Henrietta Maria turned Charles Catholic?

There's no truth to it at all. If you think about it, it doesn't make any sense. Charles I is a martyr of the Church of England, a Protestant martyr; surely he couldn't have been Catholic? It just shows how ingrained and ridiculous our prejudices have been against her.

> **"Henrietta Maria really saved Charles I's bacon during the first major battle of the Civil War, sending him arms and money from the continent"**

When Henrietta Maria first arrived in England, aged 15, Charles was already extremely attached to his father's theories about the divine right of kingship, which held at its heart the denial of papal authority. He believed that he had the right to rule not only his subjects' bodies, but also their souls – so they should worship as he did. This didn't leave space for Catholicism. When he was on the scaffold awaiting execution, he even reaffirmed his belief in the divine right of kingship and proclaimed that he was willing to die for the Church of England. He didn't change; he was the same man as he was when Henrietta Maria married him.

It's also worth pointing out that Charles continued to persecute Catholics throughout his reign. Henrietta Maria managed to mitigate this persecution in the 1630s, and there were no executions for religion during this period – to the disappointment of some MPs. But Charles was, nevertheless, still enforcing heavy fines on Catholics for not going to Church of England services. Indeed they were even heavier than those of the 1620s.

Rumour mill
A 17th-century portrait of Henrietta Maria. "She was ultimately a victim of parliamentary propaganda," Leanda de Lisle argues

BRIDGEMAN

Was she really "the wife who wore the britches"?

There must have been times in her life when she wished she was wearing the britches, but she really didn't. I think her marriage changed after the Bishops' Wars (1639 and 1640), the second of which Charles lost to the Scottish rebels. As I mentioned earlier, Charles wanted his subjects to worship as he did, but his particular brand of Protestantism was quite elaborate and anti-Calvinist, whereas the Scottish Presbyterians followed the Calvinist tradition.

After the first of these wars, he was forced to call a parliament – having not had a parliament for 11 years. Those in parliament were obviously extremely angry about the fact he had ruled without them for so long, so they started stripping him of his power and his chosen ministers. Overall, he was short of advice and help.

It was at that point that Henrietta Maria stepped up to help her husband, which she continued to do throughout the Civil War. What she did was extremely impressive. Even the king's enemies said he would never have been able to resist them without her help and support. So I think it's fair to say that she was an extremely effective partner, but not dominating. She still had to follow his decisions, at least one of which she believed cost him the Civil War – his refusal to attempt to re-take London in August 1643.

How did she support Charles during the Civil War?

She was actually in Holland during the build-up to the Civil War and in the early months of the conflict. During that period, she raised money and arms for Charles. Most people believed that he would be beaten soundly in the first major battle of the Civil War, but of course he wasn't, and both friends and enemies agreed that this was largely down to Henrietta Maria. She'd really saved his bacon by raising those arms and sending them back to England for him.

When she returned to England, she was very helpful in many ways. She managed to encourage defectors, including senior parliamentarian

Family ties
Henrietta Maria and Charles I with their son Charles and daughter Mary. Although Henrietta Maria has been portrayed as unloving, Leanda de Lisle argues that her children adored her

BRIDGEMAN

commanders. She also gave a lot of good advice: Charles's nephew Prince Rupert was extremely upset when she returned to France in 1644, because he'd grown to respect her and her advice enormously. People believed that she was firmer and more reliable than Charles.

How did she continue to support the royalist cause after Charles surrendered?
She tried several things. First of all, she attempted to encourage Charles to come to terms with his various jailers – first the Scots, then parliament and then the New Model Army. When all that failed – she was in France at this time – she then supported efforts to raise arms for the second Civil War in 1648. When the royalists lost that as well, Charles was tried as a man of blood and executed, and this had a devastating effect on Henrietta Maria.

She wanted to retire to a convent at that stage and hide herself away, but Charles wrote to her before his death and said something like: "You're vital to my cause and you're vital to what happens to the children, and you mustn't do any such thing." So she did continue to support the royalist cause, but she took on a new persona, using Catholic imagery of the Virgin as the Queen of Sorrows – you don't see it so often in England, but elsewhere you'll see images in Catholic churches of the Virgin Mary with swords through her heart. She hoped allying herself with those who had suffered would make the Catholic royals around her feel guilty for not doing more to help Charles.

So although sometimes she's perceived as a sad woman dressed in black, actually we should think of her more like Diana, Princess of Wales, after her divorce. Diana projected this image of a suffering woman, but also a very glamorous woman who understood the suffering of others around her, and people felt a great connection with her because of this. That was also true of Henrietta Maria. She used her diplomatic skills to try and keep the royalist cause alive and still went on raising money for her son, Charles II. She never gave up.

In your book, you note how Henrietta Maria was commonly portrayed as a cruel and bigoted mother, especially to her son Henry. What was her relationship with her family actually like?
I think her children adored her. I'd argue that her relationship with her third surviving son, Henry, was weaker, but that was because he was a tiny child when the Civil War broke out and he remained in parliament's care throughout the conflict. By the time he was finally released into her care at the age of about 12, they were strangers to each other.

In the mid-1650s Charles II's position was incredibly weak. He had very little support from France or Spain. I think Henrietta Maria believed that if Henry became Catholic, he would be able to marry somebody rich – or he could become a cardinal, and so have money, power and influence. To have had a Catholic brother would have also demonstrated Charles's religious tolerance at a time when he was trying to secure the support of the Catholic powers by claiming he would permit British Catholics to practise their faith.

When Henry refused she was very angry, proclaiming that he was dead to her. Again, this was not uncommon – Charles I's sister did exactly the same with her children when they converted to Catholicism. These women could not afford to have their children disobey them as this made them look weak, and would limit their ability to help the cause of their dynasty.

The real tragedy is that when Henry and another son, James, later went to fight on the continent, she wrote letters worrying about them and proclaiming how much she was looking forward to seeing the family be united after Charles II's restoration. Unfortunately, Henry died a few months after that restoration, and she was devastated by it, so to say she was unloving is wholly untrue.

How do you think Henrietta Maria should be seen now?
Henrietta Maria has been looked at far too much through the male gaze – it's time for another perspective. We should try and see her on her own terms, through her eyes. We can then see both her strengths and weaknesses, and uncover the real life of a woman who has been endlessly caricatured, but is utterly fascinating. H

Was Henrietta Maria a "witch Eve"?
Listen to an extended version of this interview with Leanda de Lisle on our podcast at *historyextra.com/podcast*

Kilt in action
Soldiers of the 42nd (Royal Highland) Regiment, photographed in 1856 after their return from the Crimean War. Scotland is "a small nation that has had a disproportionate influence… throughout the world", Murray Pittock asserts in his new book

SCOTLAND

Caledonian chronicle

RAB HOUSTON has mixed feelings about an energetic but uneven romp through four centuries of Scottish political, social, cultural and economic history

Scotland: The Global History, 1603 to the Present
by Murray Pittock
Yale, 512 pages, £25

While Scotland has existed, geographically, in roughly its present form for half a millennium, the small nation has adapted to huge political, economic and social transformations, from union and devolution to mass migration, industrialisation and deindustrialisation. It is rarely out of the British headlines these days, thanks to the prospect of another referendum on independence from the UK.

Interest in Scottish history, too, has never been stronger, fuelled by a dramatic rise in the number and quality of academic publications along with the modern popular histories that have been enriched by them. No longer parochial in outlook, historians of Scotland produce work explaining why its past matters, in terms that not only integrate research into global currents of scholarship, but also lead the way. Demand for one-stop accounts of Scotland's past and present has surged, and this book is one of many to meet this need.

The author is a professor of English literature as well as a historian. His original research is grounded largely in the 18th century, especially the Jacobites, though he has produced creditable work on Romanticism and on national identity. His discussion of Scotland's languages in this book is sure-footed, though beyond that the background research is eclectic, sometimes eccentric. And even when

GETTY IMAGES

cheerleading the Jacobites, to whose manifestly lost cause Pittock is a modern-day adherent, the treatment is episodic and allusive.

The book starts with the Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland in 1603. It is, of course, difficult to understand core narratives – such as the tensions between Highland and Lowland societies and cultures, which permeated Scottish history from the 12th to the 18th centuries – without understanding the medieval period. Pittock has already covered this ground in his more compressed *A New History of Scotland* (2003), and recycles some of that material here.

The mission remains the same, too: to chart the history of "a small nation that has had a disproportionate influence on culture, trade and industry throughout the world". *The Global History* is about Scotland itself, Scotland in Britain, and Scotland in the world. Thus we find breathless passages about migration, demography, popular protest, industrialisation and deindustrialisation, shifting trade patterns, religious developments, expatriate societies, colonies and empires, each interspersed with snippets of information that do little to further the argument. Need we be told, in a discussion of "socially responsible Presbyterianism", that Scottish minister and economist Thomas Chalmers later gave his name to Port Chalmers in New Zealand?

Pittock draws on other works in his back catalogue, such as *The Road to Independence? Scotland Since the Sixties* (2008). This allows him to explore a range of topics. He covers Scotland's postwar economic decline, buffeted by the twin pressures of British imperial divestment and capitalist globalisation. The rise of the Scottish National Party (SNP) since 1934 is examined, too, along with the culture and political economy of Scotland's largest cities, and the emergence of a distinct Scottish cultural agenda since the 1970s. Also discussed are the impact of immigrant communities on Scotland and of Scottish emigration on it and the wider world, and the changes since 1999 in both Scotland and Britain as a whole wrought by devolution and the creation of a Scottish parliament. Interpretations are quirky, occasionally one-dimensional. The ascent of the SNP comes over as inevitable, Pittock playing down the fact that unionism, broadly conceived, was the principal political force in Scotland's 20th-century history. For most Scots in that period, nationalism was British, and therefore unionist.

Even on cultural issues there is little sustained analysis. Despite the book's global scope, sweeping narrative and something-for-everyone approach, it lacks breadth of vision. There is, for example, little on the social side of cultural activities: how did ordinary people relate to their communities, work, marriage, material consumption, religious faith – as opposed to ecclesiastical organisation – and much else? Will watching Bill Forsyth's (admittedly enchanting) 1980 coming-of-age film *Gregory's Girl* really help us appreciate the experience of moving from inner-city tenements to the proliferating "new towns" of central Scotland in the 1960s and 1970s? Some passages seem designed to be trendy or conversational rather than weighty.

> **"This book will appeal to those who know relatively little of Scotland, past or present, and who relish a selective, opinionated romp strewn with random facts"**

The book promises contemporary focus, check-listing recent events, notably in the chapter covering events since 1967. Readers might prefer, instead, more historical context, to explain why particular current affairs matter – that, after all, is what a historian would do. Some passages are merely catalogues of names: bewildering lists of literary, philosophical and scientific worthies, books and films. Strangest of all, given Pittock's core discipline, is the shortage of literary criticism.

On the plus side, the book is rich in detail, and the style lively, free-flowing, and engaging – much more readable than the dreary outpourings of some popular Scottish historians. "Discovery boxes" about topics such as tartan and "Auld Lang Syne" will please readers in the diaspora (which also gets a box). It's hard, though, to justify a lengthy entry for the 17th and 18th-century financial "adventurer" John Law – except that he, like Pittock, is a Jacobite.

Yale University Press always produces beautiful books with copious colour plates and black-and-white illustrations, at attractive prices. This is one such, which will appeal to those who know relatively little of Scotland, past or present, and who relish a selective, opinionated romp strewn with random facts. Entertaining and bamboozling in equal measure, it should also stimulate readers to search for more authoritative texts on their favourite topics or periods. And it will certainly look good on the coffee table. H

Rab Houston is professor emeritus in history at the University of St Andrews, and author of *Scotland: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2008)

AUTHORS ON THE PODCAST

Kristen Green on the story of Mary Lumpkin

"After the jail holding Lumpkin was demolished in 1888, her story was hidden from view. Those who managed slave jails didn't record inmates' names, to ensure they would be almost impossible to find. But the uncovering of remnants of that jail in 2008 proved a unique opportunity. Richmond, Virginia is now considering ways to memorialise that history – to finally acknowledge its role in the slave trade and to consider the subsequent generational harm."

Matthew Kelly on the impact of four fascinating women on the British countryside

"Octavia Hill and Beatrix Potter brought land under ownership that guaranteed public right of access in perpetuity. Pauline Dower and Sylvia Sayer created statutory frameworks that ensured this public access and prevented harmful developments in valued landscapes. It's important to understand how much time, effort and commitment went into preserving what we take for granted – but which has a huge cumulative effect."

Tom Holland on the amazing life of Franz Nopcsa

"Nopcsa, a young Transylvanian aristocrat, was so intrigued by bones his sister found in 1895 that he enrolled in a palaeontology course. He later discovered that a Balkan archipelago had a crucial influence on the evolution of dinosaurs. In a way, he was the first palaeobiologist, at a time when scientists had not thought of situating dinosaurs and other prehistoric creatures within their lived environment."

ON THE EI PODCAST

SECOND WORLD WAR

Smooth operator

KATE VIGURS acclaims a vibrant account of the life and wartime travails of American-French cabaret artist – and covert resistance operative – Josephine Baker

Damien Lewis
THE FLAME OF RESISTANCE
AMERICAN BEAUTY. FRENCH HERO. BRITISH SPY.
The Untold Story of Josephine Baker's Secret War

The Flame of Resistance: American Beauty. French Hero. British Spy
by Damien Lewis
Quercus,
496 pages, £20

GETTY IMAGES

Front stage Josephine Baker performs for Allied troops in Paris, May 1940. The popular performer's war effort involved much more than just singing: joining the resistance, she undertook dangerous spy missions

Josephine Baker was "a chameleon, a rebel, a warrior, a rule-breaker at heart", according to biographer Damien Lewis. "She was undeniably at her best when she had a cause to fight for. For that… she could prove tireless, resolute, unbreakable."

Baker, an American-born dancer and singer, worked as a spy in the Second World War. In his new book, Lewis takes the reader on an epic journey of discovery, from Baker's early life in the slums of St Louis, with its brutal poverty and segregation, to the lights of the Parisian nightclubs and cabaret where she danced "until her shins bled". We are also transported to the cultural and political melting pot of Casablanca and the bleak clinic where Baker, confined to her hospital bed for months, continued her vital resistance work.

Setting Josephine's story within the bigger picture of espionage allows a fuller understanding of the world in which she sought to operate and survive. Detailed descriptions of political machinations within various intelligence bureaus with whom she served add an element of uneasiness and tension to the underlying narrative.

Just as Baker's character is complex – a woman who carried secret messages in her underwear could hardly be anything but – the book's narrative is complicated too, packed with anecdotes and information about her life. This sometimes jars, jolting the reader back to a childhood or prewar experience, but each episode is always worth hearing, often adding another layer to her multifarious personality.

As well as spiralling the narrative inwards, Lewis deftly spirals it outwards, too, so the wider picture of the war is explored in full and exquisite detail. The reader learns of Operation Torch and the desperate fight for control of north Africa, and of the birth and work of Special Operations Executive (SOE) alongside its US counterpart, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and its first 12 agents, or "apostles".

Baker's story is recounted in parallel with that of her partner in both resistance and love, Maurice Abtey, though the romantic aspect is pushed to the margins and remains largely unexplored. It is through Abtey's eyes that we watch Baker develop from a cabaret artist to a fully fledged spy, flying across Europe with her menagerie and her tour trunks stuffed with music scores – on which key information was written in invisible ink. As Baker spreads her wings and undertakes solo missions far from his watchful eye, Abtey struggles with worries as his protegee flies the nest, despite knowing that he has trained her well.

> **"In the bleak clinic in Casablanca, Baker – confined to her hospital bed for months – continued her vital resistance work"**

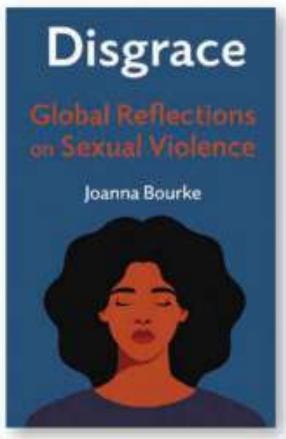
Perhaps the most uplifting part of Baker's story is her work boosting the morale of Allied troops. Taking the stage in old tour costumes, lit by the headlamps of military vehicles and sometimes even under attack, she sang firm favourites as well as the national anthems of the Allies in an effort to secure unity and camaraderie. Insisting that her audience was not segregated by colour or rank, Baker truly seems to come into her own. A heroine, a fighter, an icon: Baker stands for everything we should aspire to – and Lewis shines a spotlight on every aspect of her difficult but glittering life. H

Kate Vigurs is a historian and author of *Mission France: The True History of the Women of SOE* (Yale, 2021)

SOCIAL

World of pain

SARAH CROOK is galvanised by a global take on changing ideas and responses to sexual violence through history



Disgrace: Global Reflections on Sexual Violence
by Joanna Bourke
Reaktion Books, 352 pages, £20

There are some books that should not have to be written. In our deeply flawed world, though, they are often the ones that are most urgently needed. So it is with Joanna Bourke's new book, *Disgrace*, exploring the global history of sexual violence. The disgrace is, clearly, not the victims' but belongs to the ideologies, institutions, legal frameworks and power structures that have allowed this type of harm to be inflicted on so many people for so long. It is a type of harm that traverses time periods and national borders. This is a book written in fury: a call to action – and rightly so.

There are many terrible stories here, among them those of teenage mill worker Mary Ann Houay, gang-raped in Manchester in 1833; of "PR", a teenager raped in Italy in 1992; and of Millicent Gaika, of the South African township Gugulethu, raped in 2010.

There are also, thankfully, stories of change. So we learn that the initial conviction of PR's attacker was overturned in 1999 – in part because Italy's highest court ruled that the removal of his victim's tight jeans would have required her co-operation. This ruling provoked outrage, with activists adopting blue jeans as a potent symbol. The "blue jeans" defence was eventually undone in 2008, nearly a decade later – shamefully slow progress, but progress nonetheless. As Bourke shows, the legal injustice in PR's case was not a sad exception to an otherwise equitable legal and social system. Such flawed and damaging ideas about victimhood are deeply entrenched.

These ideas are made more dangerous when combined with racism and colonialism, which embed views about who can be a "true" victim. Moreover, as Bourke shows, some people – girls and women, minoritised ethnic communities, asylum seekers, non-binary and LGBTQ+ people – are more vulnerable than others, and these vulnerabilities are cumulative. During apartheid, women of colour were 4.7 times more likely than white women to be victims of rape in South Africa. In that nation, too, 86 per cent of black lesbians live in fear of sexual assault, while just 44 per cent of white lesbians report the same.

Interpretations of victims' behaviours are liable to change, though. Mary Ann Houay was seen to be believable in 1833 because she conformed to the stereotype of "real" victimhood. Following the attack, she became intermittently blind; she was described as "delicately formed", requiring "wine, salts, and other restoratives… to keep her from sinking under the effort" of the trial. In 19th-century Britain, these supported her claims.

As Bourke shows, such ideas about the behaviours of "true" victims soon changed. Distressed rape victims were accused of being "hysterical", discrediting their accusations. It was only in 1974 that "rape trauma syndrome" was described, observing that women responded to rape in a range of ways, and that these stress responses should not be used to deny their experiences. That term was itself replaced in 1980, when post-traumatic stress disorder became a widely accepted diagnosis.

Ideas about *who* can be a victim can change, too. In the 1920s, Russia became the first country to outlaw marital rape, followed by Czechoslovakia in 1950, then Poland in 1969 and Italy in 1976. England and Wales did so as recently as 1992, and France in 1994.

This book is compelling, engaging and important. Bourke closes her book with some suggestions for ways to create a rape-free world. We should heed them.

Sarah Crook is senior lecturer in history at Swansea University

Thin blue line Los Angeles Denim Day, 2004, with jeans symbolising resistance to sexual violence

GETTY IMAGES

FROM FACT TO FICTION

A historic loss

Ben Okri discusses how inherited grief for a disappeared ancestor inspired *The Last Gift of the Master Artists*

How did this story arise?
It had its beginnings in something my mother told me when I was a child – about an ancestor, a prince [in west Africa] who disappeared. His disappearance a long time ago still haunts her people. No one ever found out what happened to him. The trauma of disappearance lingers in families, in stories passed down. This novel sprang from an inexplicable loss, which resolved itself into one of the ways in which the slave trade impacted on the lives of ordinary families.

Did you take inspiration from any real-life historical figures?
The prince was real: he was my ancestor. He did not come to me with any name, and occupies the realm of fairy tales, because that was how it sounded when mum began to tell me about him. She could not continue with the tale because she was overcome by a grief that she had inherited – grief for an ancestor she never knew. And because I knew nothing about him, I was free to make him up. But most aspects of the novel exist, in one form or another, in the realities of Africa.

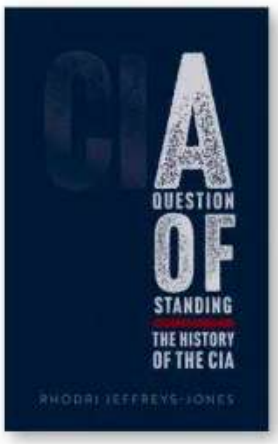
This book is a rewrite of an earlier novel. Why did you decide to change it?
I needed a tone that was transparent to magic, to stone, and to future suffering. The narrative was trimmed in places, because the way it was written gave the sense of crowdedness. That was my original intention, but the years made me realise that *The Last Gift of the Master Artists* should be a novel of spaces and gaps, to reflect the loss and the disappearances that will haunt that world that is unknowingly coming to an end. Yet it also had to be fresh, to reflect new worlds being born.

The Last Gift of the Master Artists
by Ben Okri
Head of Zeus, 512 pages, £16.99

20TH CENTURY

Central intelligence

MARK WHITE is impressed by an insightful and even-handed history spanning the CIA's first 75 years from inception to Cold War, 9/11 and modern relations with White House incumbents



A Question of Standing: The History of the CIA
by Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones
OUP, 320 pages, £20

Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, a leading authority on US intelligence, has crafted an excellent history of the CIA – erudite but fluent and accessible. It engages with important issues of interpretation while at the same time driving forward a compelling narrative of events. It is concise yet wide-ranging, tracing the history of US intelligence from its beginnings to the Biden presidency.

After explaining the origins of US intelligence, notably the establishment of a clandestine unit during Woodrow Wilson's presidency and the creation of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during the Second World War, the author examines the formation of the CIA in the context of an ever-intensifying Cold War. It had, he argues, "instant authority and standing" because it was "the world's first democratically sanctioned secret service", created by congress in 1947.

In the 1950s, the CIA became resourceful in the ways it collected intelligence – for example, flying U-2 reconnaissance planes over the Soviet Union, and constructing a tunnel under the Russian sector in Berlin. However, covert operations in that decade, including the overthrow of governments in Iran (1953) and Guatemala (1954), began to damage the moral standing of the US on the world stage. Even so – and despite the failed CIA operation to overthrow Cuban leader Fidel Castro at the Bay of Pigs in 1961, plus the agency's inability to prevent presidents from fighting a disastrous war in Vietnam – the CIA remained popular with the US public.

During the mid-1970s, however, in what became known as the "Year of Intelligence", (1975–76), a series of inquiries revealed numerous ethically troubling CIA practices. One of these was the use of assassination as an instrument of statecraft to eliminate foreign leaders. What followed, inevitably, was a degree of congressional oversight of the intelligence community.

> **"It would be too easy to portray the CIA as a wholly nefarious force – toppling governments, planning assassinations – that fuels anti-Americanism"**

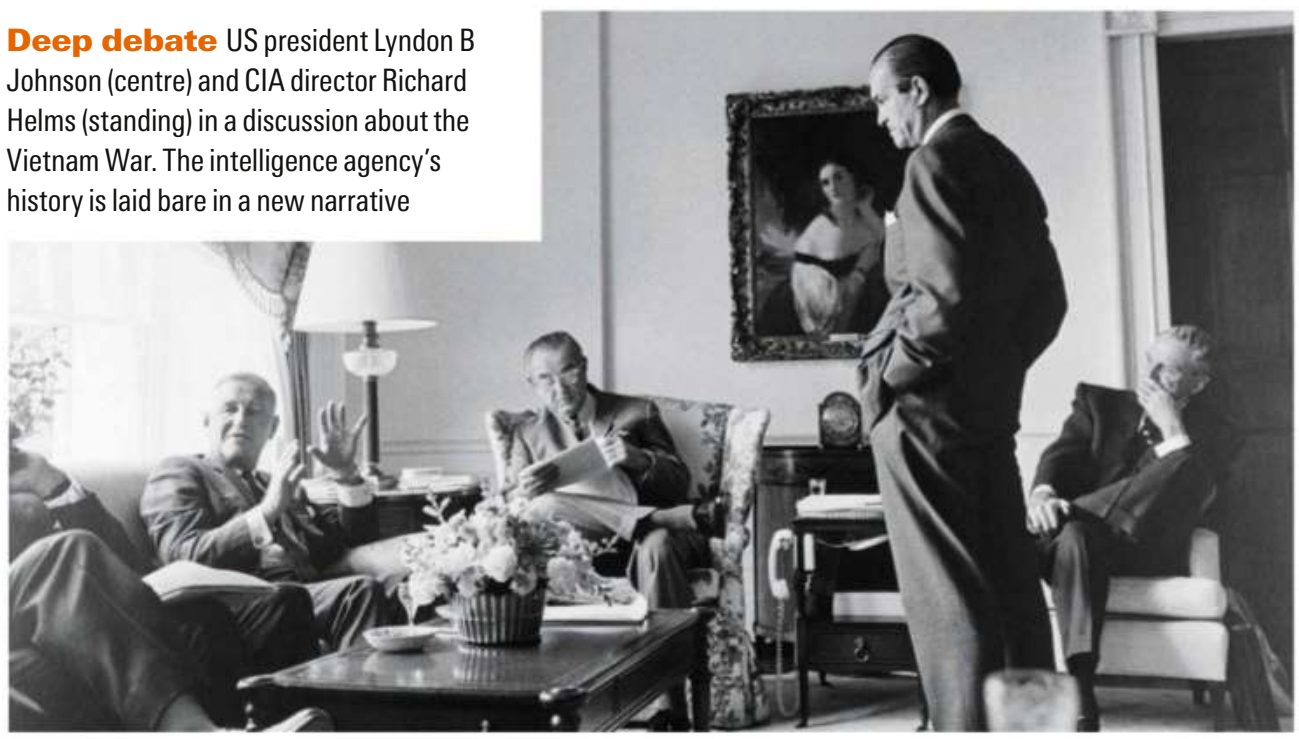
In the 1980s, the CIA failed to predict the collapse of the Soviet Union (though it did internally consider that scenario), but nonetheless played a role in the process that led to the end of the Cold War. For instance, the agency established a relationship with the anti-communist Polish resistance movement Solidarity.

The new millennium, however, would see the greatest damage inflicted on the CIA's standing and reputation when the agency failed to anticipate the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Furthermore, it was coerced by the White House into finding in Iraq evidence of weapons of mass destruction that did not exist. What followed was the 2004 Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, which clipped the CIA's wings by creating a new intelligence tsar and a National Counterterrorism Center that assumed responsibility for some of the CIA's work. This book brings the action up to the present day, discussing tensions with Donald Trump, who turned against an agency that had identified Russian assistance in his 2016 presidential election victory. It also explores the establishment of more constructive relations between the CIA and the White House following Joe Biden's victory in 2020.

Throughout this insightful history, Jeffreys-Jones emphasises how the CIA's "effectiveness has depended on its standing" with not only the White House but also the American public. This is important because public opinion affected the attitude of the president and congress towards the CIA, and the agency was dependent on the House of Representatives for appropriations.

A commendable aspect of this book is its even-handed tone. It would be too easy for a writer to portray the CIA as a wholly nefarious force – toppling governments, planning assassinations – that fuels anti-Americanism throughout much of the world. But Jeffreys-Jones also makes clear the constructive role often played by the CIA in assisting presidents in shaping US foreign policy. The result is a perspective that is both balanced and compelling. H

Mark White is professor of history at Queen Mary, University of London

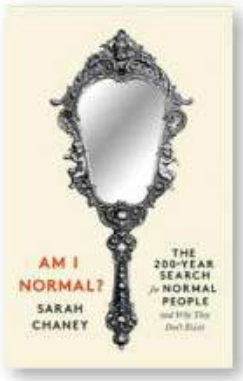


Deep debate US president Lyndon B Johnson (centre) and CIA director Richard Helms (standing) in a discussion about the Vietnam War. The intelligence agency's history is laid bare in a new narrative

BRIDGEMAN

SOCIAL

Measuring up



Am I Normal? The 200-Year Search for Normal People (and Why They Don't Exist)
by Sarah Chaney
Profile, 336 pages, £16.99

Paraphrasing *The Handmaid's Tale*, "Normal is what you're used to." As Sarah Chaney notes, this sentiment is as true in present-day society as in Margaret Atwood's dystopian Gilead.

Here, Chaney explores the history of normality in relation to human bodies, minds, emotions and societies. Drawing on an impressively broad range of scholarship, she confidently and fluently covers topics ranging from obesity, parenthood, life expectancy and IQ to the mass production of clothes, historic US "ugly laws" (restricting public appearance for disabled or poor people), gender-nonconforming "Mollies" (gay and cross-dressing men in Georgian and Victorian England), and the case of the man who stopped taking psychotic drugs in order to be able to cry at his mother's funeral. "Normality," on this reading, is the product of a particular kind of WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, Democratic) society: normal bodies and minds are white, middle-class, male, usually cis- and able-bodied, and at least ostensibly heterosexual.

As Chaney demonstrates, this has devastating consequences for individuals and communities. When a particularly privileged way of being human is used to define what is normal, less-privileged people are characterised as abnormal, even pathological. Disabilities have to be overcome or hidden away, bodies born female suffer from medications calibrated to a masculine "standard", and people of African descent are categorised as subnormal and over-emotional – or even excluded from society altogether.

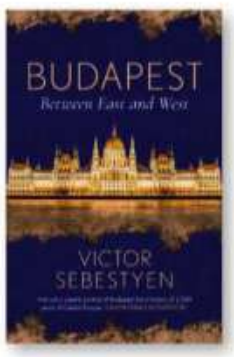
Positivity protest A woman at the Million Pound March in Santa Monica, 1998. Ideas of "normal" body weight are among those explored in Sarah Chaney's new book

At the end of this analysis of attempts to define the vast variety of human experience, I returned to one key question. The author does an outstanding job of showing how precarious this historically novel concept is: why, then, does it persist? Is it because it's so tightly linked to the self-image of the powerful? Or is it an important tool for navigating industrial, urbanised, democratic societies? I'd love to hear Chaney's thoughts on alternatives. H

Amanda Rees, reader in sociology at the University of York

EUROPE

A tale of three cities



Budapest: Between East and West
by Victor Sebestyen
Orion, 432 pages, £25

Television promotions for European river cruises often feature a boat sailing along the Danube with the Hungarian parliament building as a backdrop. An extraordinary blend of London's neo-Gothic Palace of Westminster and St Paul's Cathedral, this edifice is probably the most spectacular piece of architecture in central Europe – but it has not always been to everyone's taste. As Victor Sebestyen reminds us in his new history of Budapest, whereas Hans Christian Andersen celebrated its "fantastical… unreal beauty", the Hungarian writer Gyula Illyés dismissed it as "a Turkish bath crossed with a Gothic chapel". Either way, Sebestyen judiciously concludes, it begs to be noticed.

The parliament building is a late-19th-century confection. So is Budapest, which became a single city in 1873, uniting Pest, Buda, and Óbuda in the north. In the wake of unification, the city was comprehensively rebuilt, and Sebestyen is never less than thorough in his description of its transformation. Buda's tumbledown Church of Our Lady (the "Matthias Church") was given a spire, colourful tiles and a lavish interior. The city's waterfront was embanked, the mud flats paved over, and a grand boulevard modelled on the Champs Élysées driven through Pest.

Till the mid-19th century, what is now Budapest had been a backwater. True, Buda had a royal palace, built by Maria Theresa on the ruins of its medieval predecessor. But it had long been neglected by Hungary's Habsburg rulers, who preferred to stay in Bratislava, a day's journey downstream from Vienna. Until 1848, Bratislava – now the capital of Slovakia – was the home of Hungary's parliament and the centre of the kingdom's political life. Pest was not much more than a horse market.

Sebestyen sticks mostly to the modern period when the city came of age. He takes us through Budapest's historical, architectural and cultural maturation, but is always alert to the larger trends that have shaped its character – not least the 19th-century Jewish migration to Hungary that gave Budapest its effervescence and intellectual heft. The result is not only a rich portrait of a city but also a masterful survey of central European history that deserves to be in every cruise vessel's library. H

Martyn Rady, Masaryk professor emeritus of central European history at University College London, and author of *The Habsburgs: The Rise and Fall of a World Power* (Allen Lane, 2020)

GETTY IMAGES

ENCOUNTERS

DIARY: VISIT / WATCH / LISTEN / TASTE
By **Jonathan Wright, Samantha Nott** and **Jonny Wilkes**
94 TRAVEL... Rhodes, Greece

British film director Gurinder Chadha with a photograph of Prince Victor Duleep Singh, whose wedding to an English noblewoman in 1898 is the focus of her new documentary

CHANNEL 4

WATCH

Victorian attitudes

It was a society wedding that caused a sensation. On 4 January 1898, Prince Victor Albert Jay Duleep Singh (1866–1918), the son of Sir Duleep Singh, the last Maharaja of Lahore, married Lady Anne Coventry (1874–1956), the Earl of Coventry's daughter, at St Peter's Church in Belgravia.

It was the first time an Indian prince had married an English noblewoman, and Queen Victoria, who was represented at the service, gave the couple her blessing.

However, as *Blinded by the Light* and *Bend it Like Beckham* director Gurinder Chadha explores in a new documentary, this was by no means a story of the British establishment showing enlightened attitudes. It's said that Victoria personally told Lady Coventry never to have children with the prince, and the marriage was childless – although it is rumoured that Victor may have had a child via an affair with the wife of the Earl of Carnarvon, whose family seat is Highclere Castle – better known as the main location for *Downton Abbey.*

It also suited colonial foreign policy to have Victor stay in the UK. As the legitimate heir of the Punjab, he was a figure around whom anti-British sentiment might have gathered.

Queen Victoria and the British Maharaja
Channel 4 / Sunday 14 August

LISTEN

A radical life

The life of countercultural leader Emmett Grogan (1942–78, pictured below) was short but eventful. In his autobiography, *Ringolevio: A Life Played for Keeps* (1972), he wrote of being hooked on heroin as a child before kicking the habit and winning a scholarship to a posh Manhattan school.

But it was on the west coast of the US that Grogan – pictured below in 1972 – found fame. As leader of a group called The Diggers (named after the Civil War-era English radicals), who gave away free food and staged direct actions, Grogan kicked against the commercialisation that, in his estimation, had surrounded hippiedom from the off.

Largely set during 1967's Summer of Love, Jonathan Myerson's two-part adaptation of *Ringolevio* features more than 100 characters played by a cast of nine actors.

Ringolevio
BBC Radio 4 / Sunday 21 August

LISTEN

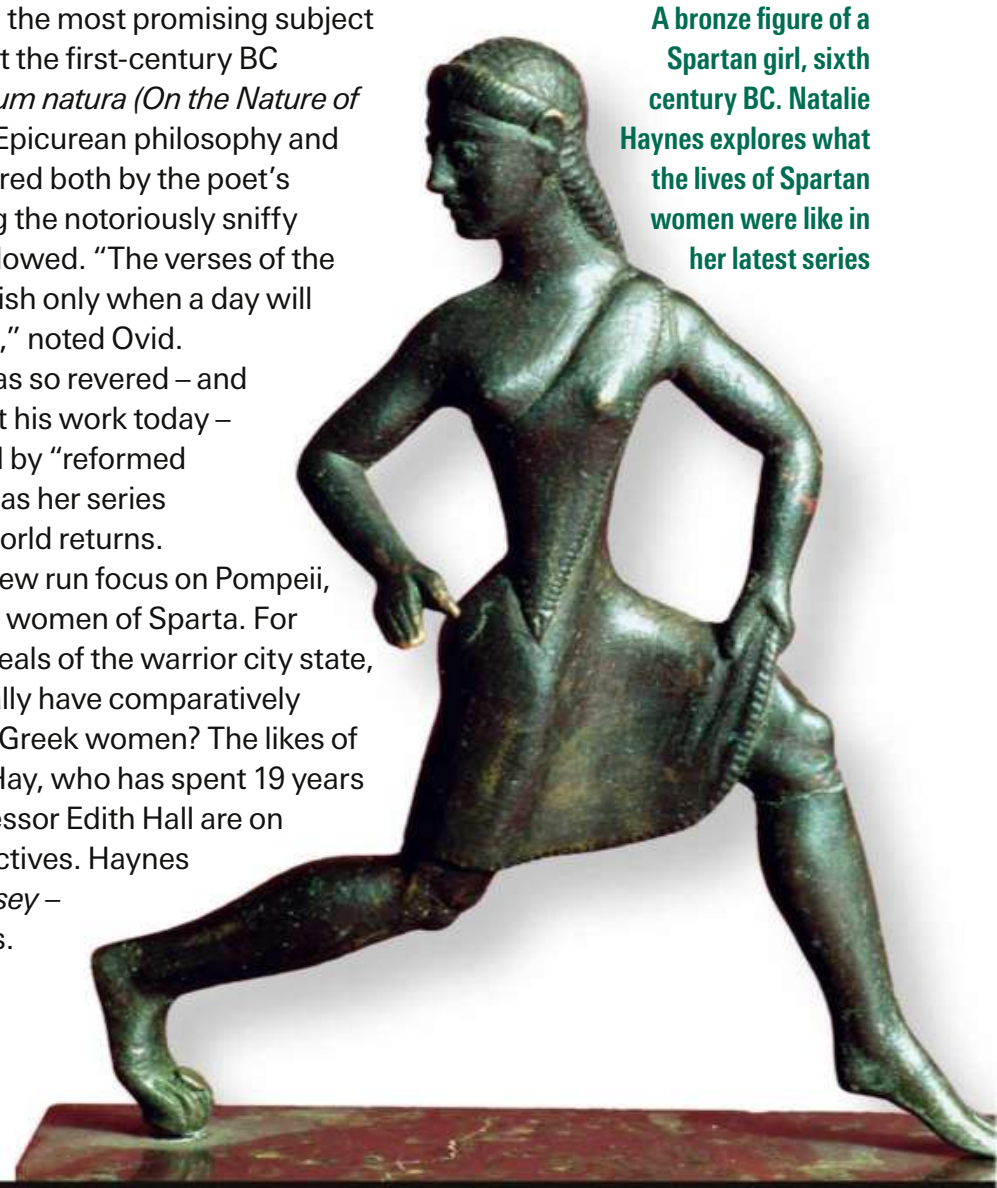
Classic stories

It really doesn't sound like the most promising subject to fill a six-book poem. But the first-century BC Roman Lucretius's *De rerum natura (On the Nature of Things)*, which dealt with Epicurean philosophy and physics, was hugely admired both by the poet's contemporaries, including the notoriously sniffy Cicero, and those who followed. "The verses of the sublime Lucretius will perish only when a day will bring the end of the world," noted Ovid.

As to why Lucretius was so revered – and why we should care about his work today – these are subjects tackled by "reformed standup" Natalie Haynes, as her series devoted to the classical world returns.

Other episodes in the new run focus on Pompeii, and Queen Gorgo and the women of Sparta. For all the hyper-masculine ideals of the warrior city state, did Spartan women actually have comparatively more freedom than other Greek women? The likes of archaeologist Dr Sophie Hay, who has spent 19 years working in Italy, and Professor Edith Hall are on hand to offer their perspectives. Haynes also retells Homer's *Odyssey* – in a breakneck 28 minutes.

Natalie Haynes Stands Up for the Classics
Radio 4 / Sunday 14 August



A bronze figure of a Spartan girl, sixth century BC. Natalie Haynes explores what the lives of Spartan women were like in her latest series

American actor D'Arcy Carden (best known for her role in *The Good Place*) stars as Greta, out to prove she can play baseball as well as the men in a new wartime league for women

WATCH

Pitch perfect

Grossing more than $130m worldwide, Penny Marshall's 1992 comedy-drama *A League of Their Own* was a heavily fictionalised account of the early days of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (1943–54), which at its peak in 1948 attracted more than 900,000 spectators to games.

Fast forward to 2022 and, with so much more interest in the history of women's sport, it's clearly a subject ready for revisiting. Which is precisely what this new series does, promising to widen the perspective to tell the stories of a generation of women who dreamed of playing baseball professionally.

A League of Their Own
Prime Video / Streaming from Friday 12 August

BBC/PRIME VIDEO/BRIDGEMAN

The Osman family in a Suffolk supermarket in 1972. They were among the Asian refugees to arrive in the UK, having been expelled from Idi Amin's Uganda

LISTEN

Far from home

In early August 1972, the brutal Ugandan president Idi Amin announced the expulsion of the majority of his country's 80,000-strong Asian population, giving them just 90 days to leave the country. So began the forced exodus of a community long established in Uganda – but also resented by some, because the British had favoured those of Indian heritage during the colonial era.

As presenter Ashok Patel recalls for this one-off documentary, thousands of Ugandan Asians sought sanctuary in the United Kingdom. A teenager in Leicester, he remembers the new arrivals starting at his school. His own parents were from Gujarat in India, but their story of emigration was clearly very different from that of those he was meeting, many of whom were traumatised by their experiences.

Half a century later, Ashok speaks with Ugandan Asians to discover what they think about the expulsion. His Interviewees include Manzoor Moghal, who met Idi Amin in Jeddah in 1984 and wrote a book about a man who was himself forced into exile in 1979. Ashok also speaks to his own wife, Anita Masani Patel, and for the first time learns how she feels when she sees images of Syrian or Ukrainian refugees.

ALAMY

My Name Is Ashok
BBC Radio 4 / Monday 15 August

Weekly TV & radio
Visit *historyextra.com* for updates on upcoming TV and radio programmes

HISTORY ON THE AIRWAVES

"Fashion is such a gloriously important art form, but it so rarely gets the attention it deserves"

GUS CASELY-HAYFORD (left), director of V&A East, tells us about his upcoming radio series stitching together the history of fashion

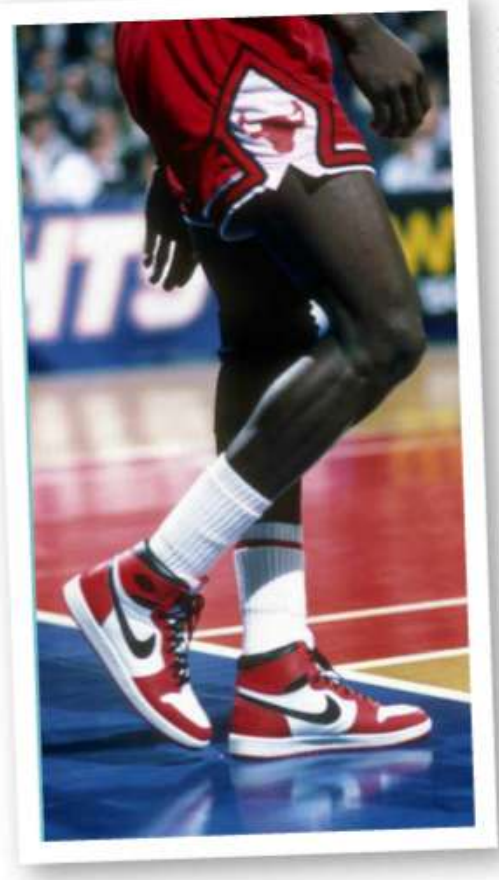
Your new series is about fashion, but why was the name *Torn* chosen?
The word is an allusion to fabric, but also to history. The series tells the stories of some of the most iconic, beloved and well-worn fashions seen throughout the centuries and around the world: the sorts of items that many of us can feel a personal connection to, but, like a lot of fashion, we might end up taking a bit for granted. Fashion is such a gloriously important art form, but it so rarely gets the attention and acknowledgement it deserves.

We talk about the reasons why we love clothes and how they came into being, with the help of the designers and experts and by investigating the materials used to make them. More than that, however, we explore the sorts of memories that are attached to clothes and the reasons that they can actually become important to us.

How is the series structured?
Given that we only had a few episodes, it was impossible to cover the entire story of fashion and design of clothing. What we've tried to do is choose particular items – for example, Nike Air Jordans. Probably many of us have some in the back of our wardrobes and wear them on a fairly regular basis. But have we ever thought about how they came to be, or the reasons why they became iconic? Do we think about the subtle modulations in the ways in which they have changed over a generation, and how they have been used as political statements? We try to explore all of those questions.

Fashion is a powerful medium for displaying such subtle things, which in turn talk to the history not of the powerful or wealthy, but of the rest of us.

Can you give us other examples of some of the items you chose to feature?
The calico bag is pretty much ubiquitous, so the series delves into where it came from, while the mauve dress has a fascinating history linked to the discovery of new technologies to create new forms of colour [during the Victorian era]. Another item worth looking at is the fisherman's sweater: a garment that began out of utility, but grew into something fashionable. Yet, while it is worn by people all over, it still holds a deep connection to a specific place [the Isle of Lewis], so much so that it defines and redefines that area.



Michael Jordan wearing his Air Jordans on the basketball court, c1985. *Torn* explores why this footwear became so iconic

Were the collections at the V&A a source of inspiration?
Absolutely. It's like having a treasure box to dip into. For a series like this, we were absolutely spoilt for choice. For me, the V&A has been a wonderful encyclopaedia. H

Torn will be broadcast on BBC Radio 4 from Monday 22 August

TASTE

Carrot pudding

In *The Compleat Cook* (1681), Rebecca Price's recipe begins: "Take a twopenny lofe grated; and the same quantity of raw caret grated very small." The key word there is "raw". Most 18th-century recipes for carrot pudding, such as Henry Howard's in *England's Newest Way* (1703), suggest boiling the carrots.

However, this recipe uses uncooked carrots for a more rustic texture. It's a blissful blend of a number of historical puddings – the pie is lined with puff pastry, as Howard suggested, and has pinches of nutmeg and cinnamon, as featured in Eliza Smith's version in *The Compleat Housewife* (1727). The result is a scrumptious afternoon or after-dinner treat.

Difficulty: 2/10
Time: 40–50 mins

INGREDIENTS

For a 22cm pie:
4 egg yolks
2 egg whites
½ tsp ground nutmeg
½ tsp ground cinnamon
50g raw sugar
170g grated carrots
2 tbsp sherry
150ml double cream
120g fresh breadcrumbs
100g melted butter
½ sheet or block of puff pastry

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C (375°F). Beat the egg yolks and whites in a bowl with the spices and the raw sugar. Add the grated carrots, sherry and double cream.

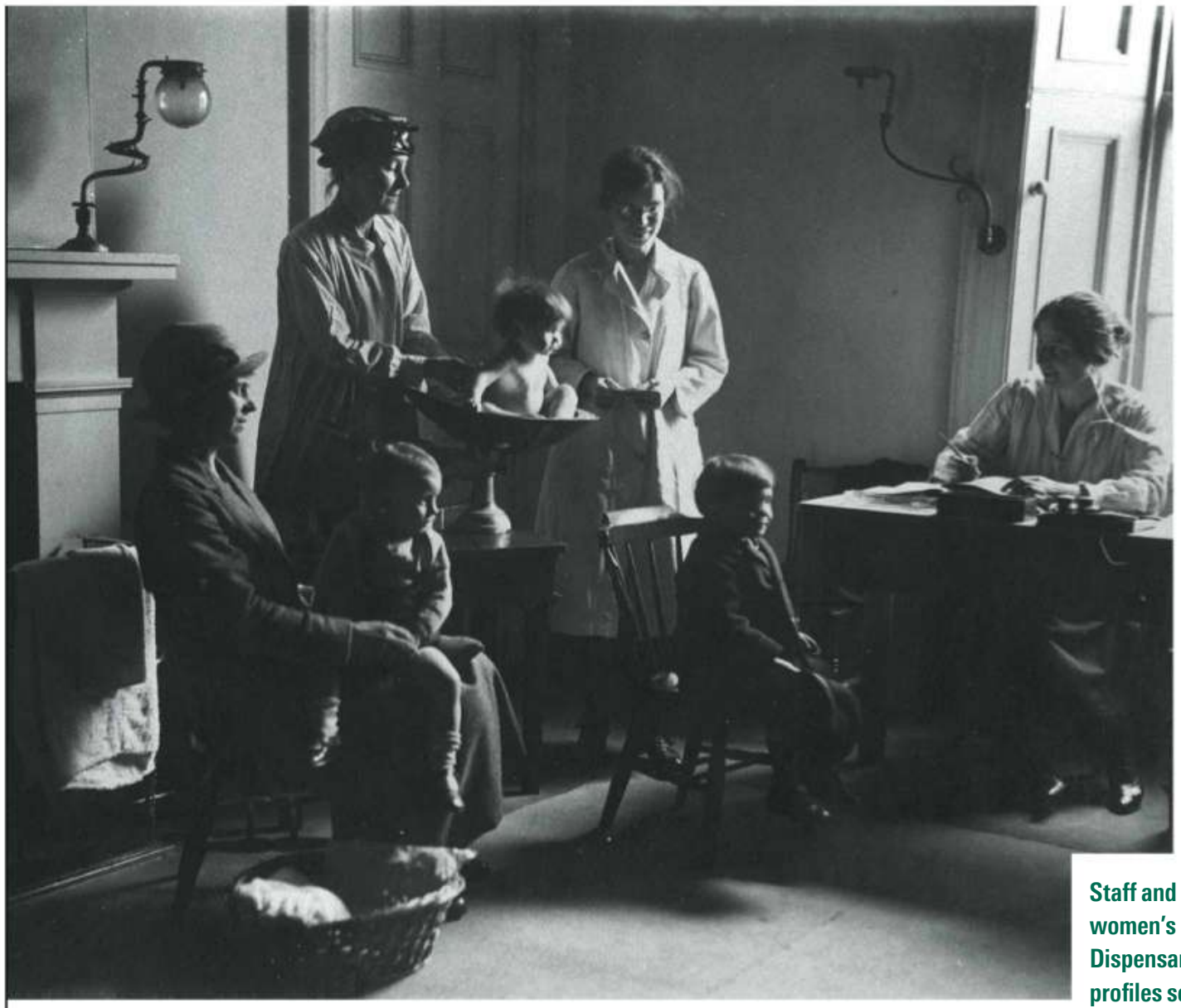
2. Fold in the breadcrumbs and melted butter, combining well with a wooden spoon to make a thick batter.

3. Line the pie dish with the puff pastry, then pour in the batter.

4. Bake at the bottom of the oven for 30–40 minutes until the pastry is nice and golden.

This spiced carrot pudding is perfect for a decadent afternoon treat

Recipe sourced from Pride and Pudding: The History of British Puddings, Savoury and Sweet, by Regula Ysewijn (Murdoch Books, 2nd edition, 2022)



VISIT

Hidden heroes

As part of Scotland's Year of Stories 2022, this exhibition celebrates the lives and deeds of lesser-known people, and members of marginalised communities, who helped shape the nation. In focus are figures including Ethel Moorhead, an artist and suffragette who threw an egg at Winston Churchill; Tom Jenkins, who in the early 18th century became Britain's first black schoolteacher; and Agnes McDonald, who, when executed in 1714, would be the last person hanged under anti-Gypsy laws.

Unforgettable

Stanley Mills, Perth / Until 18 September / Booking advised / *historicenvironment.scot*

Staff and patients in Scotland's first women's hospital, Grove Street Dispensary, c1920s. A new exhibition profiles some of the nation's pioneers

HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

WATCH

Modernist masterpiece

James Joyce's *Ulysses* is a masterpiece of 20th-century literature. Taking place over a single day, 16 June 1904, it's rich, controversial, replete with gags and – for some readers – famously impenetrable, due to the Irish writer's use of stream-of-consciousness prose to document the Dublin wanderings of Leopold Bloom.

To mark the novel's centenary, director Adam Low's feature-length documentary follows its creation from early drafts through to its publication in Paris in 1922, when it was bound in the blue of the Greek flag in honour of Homer's *Odyssey*. Novelists offering their thoughts include Salman Rushdie, Colm Tóibín, Anne Enright, Howard Jacobson and Eimear McBride.

Arena: James Joyce's Ulysses
BBC Two /
Friday 26 August

James Joyce pictured in 1928. *Ulysses* was his magnum opus

Books don't have to be made from paper, as artist Dizzy Pragnell's use of foodstuffs demonstrates

VISIT

Open book

For those who adore the smell of an old book and the feeling of thumbing through pages, this exhibition dedicated to the sensory experience of reading will surely be a delight. An eclectic display plucked from the Bodleian archives, from medieval manuscripts to contemporary works, shows how books can engage all five senses, as well as proprioception (the sense of self-movement and body perception; say, when turning a page). Artefacts range from a 14th-century psalter with fingermarks over an illumination of heaven, as if the readers were swiping their own souls up; a wearable scroll of spells; and a modern book made entirely from cheese. The exhibition also explores the accessibility of reading today for the sensory impaired.

Sensational Books
Weston Library, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford / Until 4 December / Free entry / *visit.bodleian.ox.ac.uk*

BODEIAN LIBRARY/ GETTY/CHANNEL 4

An ornately decorated hilt collar of an Anglo-Saxon seax (long knife). It's one of the items from the Staffordshire Hoard on display at Sutton Hoo

VISIT

In awe of the Anglo-Saxons

In 1939 the Sutton Hoo ship burial was discovered; 70 years later, the Staffordshire Hoard was unearthed. They are the most important finds in the archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England, and now over 60 of their glittering treasures – such as a gold and garnet shoulder clasp and a curved golden buckle – are on display side by side.

By revealing the similarities in design and craftsmanship of the artefacts, this major exhibition offers the tantalising possibility that the hoard, although found around 150 miles away, originated at the same seventh-century workshops in East Anglia that served Sutton Hoo. H

Swords of Kingdoms
Sutton Hoo, Suffolk / Until 30 October / Booking required / *nationaltrust.org.uk/sutton-hoo*

Pillar of the past
The island of Rhodes has a wealth of ancient architecture, such as that on the Acropolis of Lindos (pictured here)

DREAMSTIME

A mirror of the ancient world

If you're looking for a Greek island holiday with history around every corner, Rhodes is an excellent choice. Many civilisations have passed through the largest Dodecanese island – ancient Greek, Roman and Byzantine among them. All left their mark, but you'll also find the influence of lesser-known adventurers.

In the 13th century, Rhodes was briefly controlled by the Republic of Genoa in an opportunistic conquest. Though it was taken back into the hands of an increasingly weak Byzantine empire, in 1306 the Knights Hospitaller swept in to capture Rhodes, along with neighbouring islands. They ruled for more than 200 years, as evidenced by the many leftover buildings and fortifications in Rhodes Town, before being ousted by Ottoman forces.

The island's greatest gem is Rhodes Town, perhaps the finest place in all of Greece to wander aimlessly, exploring timeless alleyways and ditching day-tripping crowds. The Old Town's ramparts and moat can also be explored on foot. The Palace of the Grand Master's pair of exhibitions sets the scene for both the town and island's history.

Other spots also deserve a visit. Come early or late to see the best of Lindos, its beautifully situated Acropolis looming over the small-but-sweet old village centre. Ancient life still feels very vivid at well-preserved Kamiros, and there are also castles and monasteries to explore.

Car is the best way to get around, but tours and local buses are also available. Most visitors get to Rhodes by plane, but you can arrive by ferry from many other Greek islands and Piraeus (Athens' huge port), as well as from Turkish ports. H

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

- Explore the glories of the Mediterranean's varied historical influences in and around **Split, Croatia**.
- For a different take on Greece, head to the museums and Byzantine churches of the bustling second city of **Thessaloniki**.

By **Tom Hall**, travel writer and co-author of *Lonely Planet's Guide to Train Travel in Europe* (2022)

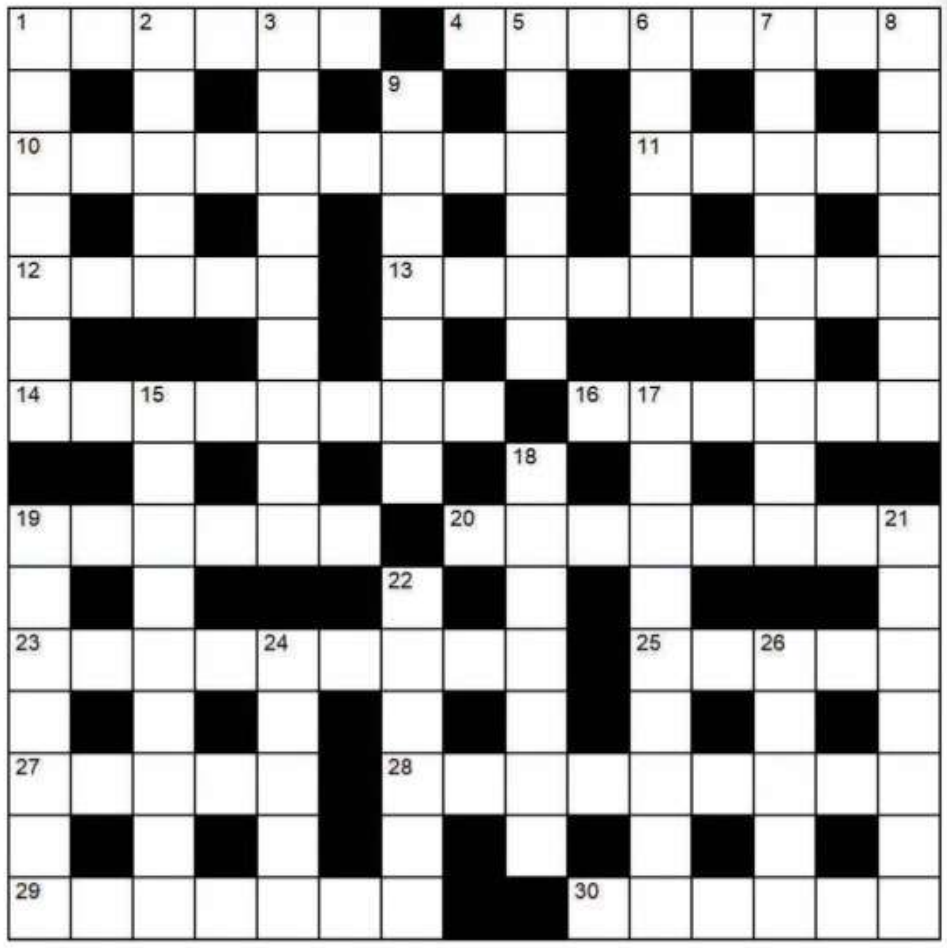
PRIZE CROSSWORD

Book worth £30 for 3 winners

Aerial Atlas of Ancient Britain

By David R Abram

Britain's ancient monuments are presented from a dramatic new perspective in this stunning collection of aerial images. Documenting sites from Neolithic stone circles to Iron Age hillforts, the photographs reveal how the people of ancient Britain shaped the landscapes around us. The book contains a foreword by Alice Roberts.



Across

1 Great Roman writer, statesman and orator (106–43 BC) (6)
4 Strait in the English Channel where the *Mary Rose* sank in 1545 (8)
10 Queen of Jerusalem who ruled (alongside her husband and, later, her son, often amid tension and opposition) in the 12th century (9)
11 Southern Chinese city, once a Portuguese colony and now a major gambling centre (5)
12 Side in the American Civil War opposed to the Confederacy (5)
13 Artillery explosive used, for example, to illuminate areas between enemy trenches (4,5)
14 A major example is the Great Plague of London (1665–66) (8)
16 "Bessie" ____, mistress of Henry VIII who bore his son Henry Fitzroy (6)
19 A favourite of Queen Elizabeth I, executed by her successor, James VI & I (6)
20 Medieval fortress, long the capital of the Serbian state of Raška (5,3)
23 ____ ballad, a simple verse or narrative, often about a sensational crime or disaster, sold in the streets (15th–19th centuries) (9)
25 Alfred ____, Swedish inventor of dynamite (5)
27 Mythical co-founder of Rome (5)
28 Christopher ____, Anglo-American writer whose *Berlin Stories*, set in the Weimar era, inspired the musical *Cabaret* (9)
29 Sobriquet of Louis XIV of France (3,4)
30 British tabloid newspaper launched in 1964, replacing the *Daily Herald* (3,3)

Down

1 The Paris ____, a brief revolutionary government established in 1871 (7)
2 Roberto ____, "God's banker", whose death in London in 1982 remains controversial (5)
3 Julius and Ethel ____, US civilians executed for conspiracy to commit espionage in 1953 (9)
5 Abbreviated name for a ready-made dwelling assembled on site; many were erected in post-Second World War Britain (6)
6 *The* ____, British newspaper called the *Daily Universal Register* when first published on 1 January 1785 (5)
7 Former name of UK government department, from the square-patterned tablecloth used for revenue counting (9)
8 Men's tailored jacket, very popular from the 15th to 17th centuries (7)
9 Aristotle Socrates ____, shipping magnate who married Jackie Kennedy in 1968 (7)
15 British crown dependency said to have the world's oldest continuous parliament (4,2,3)
17 18th-century prime minister who, after resigning, served as a secretary of state in a coalition with Charles James Fox (4,5)
18 City where a series of treaties were signed in 1713–14, concluding the War of the Spanish Succession (7)
19 Alice ____, academic and presenter who made her TV debut on *Time Team* in 2001 (7)
21 Westernised name of the sultan whose capture of Jerusalem in 1187 sparked the Third Crusade (7)
22 "A third part", applied especially to a division of Yorkshire (6)
24 Morarji ____, the first Indian prime minister to represent a party other than the Indian National Congress (5)
26 Major British company founded in 1849 as a herbal medicine shop in Nottingham (5)

Who is this sultan who took Jerusalem in 1187? ***(21 down)***

Compiled by **Eddie James**

HOW TO ENTER

● Open to residents of the UK (& Channel Islands). Post entries to ***BBC History Magazine*, September 2022 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA** or email them to ***september2022@historycomps.co.uk*** by 5pm on **31 August 2022**. ● Entrants must supply full name, address and phone number. The winners will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. Winners' names will appear in the November 2022 issue. By entering, participants agree to be bound by the terms and conditions shown in full in the box below. Immediate Media Company Ltd (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) will use personal details in accordance with the Immediate Privacy Policy at *https://policies.immediate.co.uk/privacy* ● Immediate Media Company Ltd (publishers of *BBC History Magazine*) would love to send you newsletters, together with special offers and other promotions. If you would not like to receive these, please write 'NO INFO' on your entry.
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Solution to our July 2022 crossword

Across 1 Wapping 5 Mammoth 10 Eton 11 Poindexter 12 Alice Lisle 13/22 Moll King 14 Tambo 16 Lettice 19 Cassino 20 Udall 24 Peninsular 27 Tintoretto 28 Dudo 29 Knesset 30 Rosetta
Down 2 Attila 3 Punic Wars 4 Nepal 6 Audley End 7 Maxim 8 The block 9 Pius 15 Bonaparte 17 Tolpuddle 18 Maximian 21 Bandit 23 Goths 25 Nato 26 Nkomo

Three winners of *Heaven on Earth*
P Holmes, Lincolnshire; W Clifford, Somerset; W Bawden, Surrey

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GETTY IMAGES

Here's a selection of the exciting content that's coming up on our website **historyextra.com**

The dangerous mythology of Franz Ferdinand's assassination

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914 has been so manipulated and mythologised that it's time we spoke of a "Sarajevo myth", argues historian Paul Miller-Melamed.
Historyextra.com/franz-ferdinand

A brief history of strike action

From striking feltmakers in the 17th century to the miners' strike of 1984–85, Professor Keith Laybourn examines the history of industrial action and explores the punishments that were faced by striking workers.
Historyextra.com/history-strike-action

Tutankhamun podcast

One hundred years ago, in 1922, Egyptologist Howard Carter unearthed the tomb of Tutankhamun in Egypt's Valley of the Kings. In our new podcast series, Ellie Cawthorne investigates the life, death and legacy of the iconic pharaoh.
Historyextra.com/podcast-series-tutankhamun

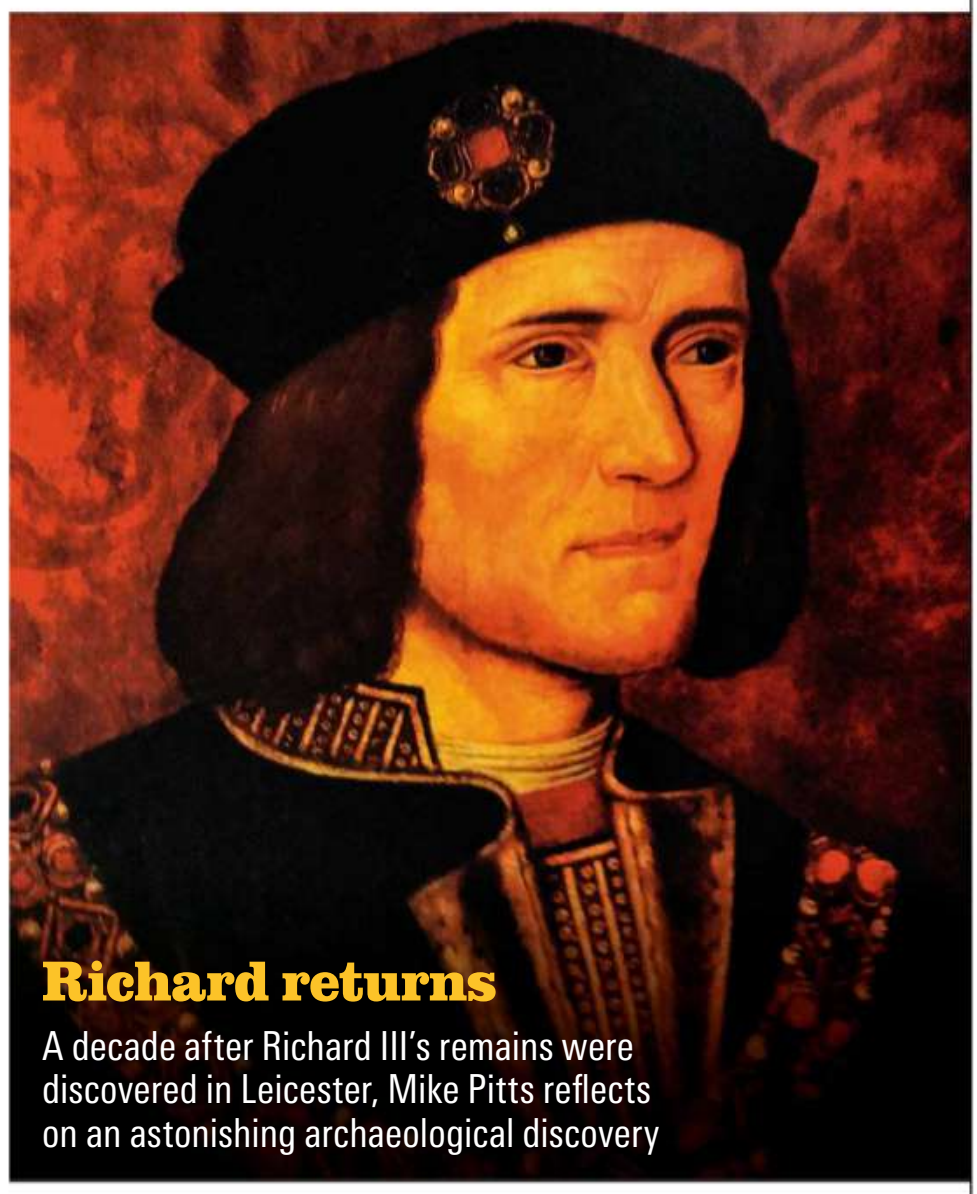
Newsletters

We've recently launched several themed newsletters bringing you the latest developments in some of the most popular periods of the past. Sign up to receive regular updates of historical news, as well as details of the new articles, podcasts and videos that are available on our website.
historyextra.com/newsletters

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

NEXT MONTH

October issue on sale 1 September 2022



Richard returns

A decade after Richard III's remains were discovered in Leicester, Mike Pitts reflects on an astonishing archaeological discovery

Ancient mystery

Toby Wilkinson charts the 19th-century race to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphs

Floating jails

Anna McKay describes the conditions inside Georgian prison hulks

Marie Antoinette

Catriona Seth tells the tragic queen's story in her own words

MY HISTORY HERO

Singer, songwriter and composer ***Laura Mvula*** *chooses*

Thelonious Monk

1917–82

Laura Mvula is an award-winning singer, songwriter and composer. For more details on her new album and forthcoming UK tour, go to *lauramvula.com*

Thelonious Monk sports his distinctive look of a hat and sunglasses for a photo shoot in the late 1940s. "I was initially scared of his music because it was so different to anything I'd heard up to that point," says Laura Mvula

IN PROFILE

Thelonious Monk was a pioneering pianist and composer in the American jazz scene of the 1940s, 50s and 60s. Known for his improvisational style, he composed such classics as 'Blue Monk, Well, You Needn't', and ''Round Midnight'. One of only five jazz musicians to appear on the cover of *Time* magazine, he is among the most-recorded jazz composers in history. In 1982, Monk died of a stroke aged 64 after a period of declining health.

> "Monk would sit down at rehearsals and social gatherings and not say a word for hours on end. I have a sense of a mysterious force of a man"

When did you first hear about Monk? When I was around 11 or 12. My Dad was a huge jazz head and, like Monk, a passionate improviser on the piano. Being the man of the house he dictated what music was played and it was always things like Miles Davis, John Coltrane and Thelonious Monk. When I first heard Monk, I was initially scared of his music because it was so different to anything else that I'd heard up to that point.

What kind of person was he? He was eccentric and bold, something of a risk taker and, unlike some of his contemporaries, very much a family man. There was an elusive quality to him too. Monk was quite a reticent figure and would sit down both at rehearsals and social gatherings, and not say a word for hours on end. I have a sense of a mysterious force of a man.

What made Monk a hero? Firstly, his incredible music, having been part of a pioneering period of modern jazz. Then there was his particular creative story and the fact that he was misunderstood for so much of his career. Because some critics regarded him as "difficult", he struggled with poor record sales, but he stayed committed to his art and I gather that he's now the second most-recorded jazz composer ever.

You've also got to see Monk's achievements in the context of the racial climate in New York in the 1950s and 1960s. To rise to prominence as a pianist and composer at that time is another reason why I regard him as a hero.

What was his finest hour? For me, it would be a tune called 'Thelonious'. I love how Monk fused musical styles: he drew on the blues, but created an angular, displaced rhythmic music all of his own. He could say so much with one note and I have a similar love for this technique, which changes the harmony under a note. It's almost impressionistic in its subtlety and power.

Can you see any parallels between Monk's life and your own? I feel an unconscious parallel with Monk because, despite releasing some well-received records over the last 10 years or so, my music has been subjected to the same sort of comments as his. But I have a similar conviction to follow my own path.

Would you have liked to make music together? Definitely – of all my jazz heroes, he's the one I would most like to collaborate with and share that bliss you experience when lost in the music. I'd also want to ask him about his (reportedly difficult) relationship with Miles Davis. It's even been rumoured that they came blows!

Laura Mvula was talking to York Membery

In Radio 4's **Great Lives**, guests choose inspirational figures: *bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qxsb*

BBC RADIO 4

GETTY IMAGES

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